

**An Examination of Accessibility Planning for Persons
with Disabilities in Mid-size Canadian Municipalities**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Margaret Sanderson

Abstract

Approximately one out of every seven Canadians over the age of 15 years (3.4 million people) has some level of disability. The increasing prevalence of disability in our aging society is commonly accepted as fact with both disability and the severity of disability gradually increasing with age (Statistics Canada, 2001). Recognizing that persons with disabilities often face "barriers" to full participation in society, some provinces have enacted human rights or accessibility planning legislation to remove these barriers.

This study examines the process of accessibility planning for persons with disabilities within Canadian municipalities with a population of between 50,000 – 500,000, otherwise referred to as mid-size cities (MSC). The underlying assumption of this research is that mid-size Canadian municipalities are carrying out some form of accessibility planning using planning instruments [or other tools] to remove barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. The purpose of this study is to determine: first, what planning instruments are being used in the design of open space and built environments in MSCs to remove physical barriers, and what other tools are available to attain greater accessibility for persons with disabilities living in mid-size urban settings. Secondly, to consider who is involved in the implementation and use of planning instruments and other tools, and to determine what are their respective roles. Third, to discover the conditions under which planning instruments and other tools are being applied, to learn what financial or other resources are being allocated and how are they being allocated in the short and long term.

This study concludes that planning instruments are being used to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in mid-size Canadian municipalities. Planning tools are not the only way to remove barriers to persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the effectiveness of those tools is clearly contingent upon available human and financial resources. Nevertheless, the study finds that municipal planners and others are using these essential planning tools in a variety of ways to remove physical barriers to accessibility. Inherent in all efforts to remove barriers is the active involvement of persons with disabilities. Thus, involving persons with disabilities in the development and application of planning instruments and other tools has the potential to build the foundation of successful accessibility planning efforts in Canadian mid-size communities. These conclusions have implications for research in the area of accessibility planning and recommendations for Canadian planning practice.

Acknowledgements

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It goes without saying that I thank each of the 52 survey respondents from mid-size municipalities across the country who took the time to respond. Thank you. I hope we can continue to learn from each other.

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Preface

I have always lived with the experience of physical disability and have a keen personal interest in advancing endeavours in this area. For many years I have been fortunate enough to have the privilege to be involved professionally in disability issues and to participate on local, provincial and national committees with other colleagues in the field. I am honoured to have this opportunity to contribute to our understanding of the barriers encountered by persons with disabilities through this analysis of planning practices and recommendations.

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Area of Study

Access to all facets of society for persons with disabilities has been a matter of discussion in North America since the 1970's. The traditional societal perception of "disability" underwent a fundamental paradigm shift during this time stemming from the efforts of both civil rights and Independent Living movement activists (Gleeson, 1999). The notion that disability resided within the individual (medical model) was replaced by the idea that disability was "experienced" by persons with disabilities encountering barriers to their participation as a consequence of "disabling environments" (Gleeson, 1999). This circumstance led most Western nations to adopt legislation and codes calling for the removal of environmental barriers and accessibility improvements for persons with disabilities.

In Canada, the government proclaimed 1983-1992 the "Decade of Disabled Persons" following the United Nations International Year of the Disabled (1981), and the securing of equality rights for persons with disabilities in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. Principle 5 of a declaration signed by the Prime Minister in 1985 stated:

"Individuals with disabilities shall be assured access to the fundamental elements of daily life that are generally available in the community. Wherever possible the effects of an impairment or disability on an individual's life shall not be determined by environmental factors" (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 1994, p.6).

Since this time, both the federal government and provinces have continued to refine regulations in response to international Human Rights legislation. Recent revisions to the Ontario Human Rights Code provide a specific example of removing environmental barriers to persons with disabilities in the design and renovation of buildings:

...”When constructing new buildings, undertaking renovations...design choices should be made that do not create barriers for persons with disabilities” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2000, p.12).

Furthermore, the Province of Ontario enacted the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001 (ODA), the first and only legislation of its type in Canada. The ODA requires municipalities (population 10,000+) and other public sector organizations to undertake a planning process to identify, remove and prevent barriers (physical and other barriers) to the participation of persons with disabilities (Ministry of Community and Social Services, 2006). By September 30, 2003 most Ontario municipalities had completed their first annual accessibility plan required under the legislation (Ministry of Community and Social Services, 2006). However, the long-term impact of this legislation remains to be measured. In June 2005, the Province of Ontario passed a second piece of legislation, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) requiring the implementation of mandatory accessibility standards in both the public and private sectors “in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities with respect to goods,

services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025” (Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, 2005).

Most recently, in December 2005, the Province of Québec became the second province to enact provincial legislation – R.S.Q., Chapter E-20.1 An Act to Secure Handicapped Persons in the Exercise of their Rights with a View to Achieving Social, School and Workplace Integration (Gouvernement du Québec, 2006). Within Division III.I of this legislation, all municipalities over 15,000 in population are required to develop an “action plan” to remove barriers to persons with disabilities in municipal services.

Whether or not individual provinces have accessibility planning legislation, Canadian cities historically have shown capacity to remove barriers to the participation of persons with disabilities. Large Canadian cities such as Vancouver, the first city in Canada to provide scheduled bus service to people with disabilities (Atkinson, 2003), and Toronto’s adoption of universal design principles in the Toronto Official Plan (Holten, 2001) have been known for longstanding accessibility planning efforts and are notable models for examination.

However, a significant percentage of Canadians, almost one quarter or 23%, live in “mid-size” communities (often referred to as mid-size cities or MSCs) which fall within the 50,000-500,000 population range. (Waterloo Community-University Research Alliance, 2004). These MSCs outnumber the larger Canadian cities

(Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary), yet the greatest amount of research and literature remains focused on Canada's largest cities (Legault, 2005). As Bradford (2002, p.v) acknowledges, "second tier local places are less well-studied but representative nonetheless of much contemporary urban experience and community dynamics." As a result of the documented lack of research on MSCs in Canada, Seasons (2003) suggests little is known about planning practice in MSCs. As a relatively new area within planning, even less is known about accessibility planning for persons with disabilities in MSCs.

This thesis addresses this gap by focusing specifically on Canadian MSCs and asks: What are mid-size municipalities such as Kelowna, British Columbia, Sherbrooke, Quebec and Barrie, Ontario doing to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities? More importantly, are they using innovative means to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities? A recent article in *Plan Canada* (Spring 2003) indicates such is the case when describing the City of Hamilton (mid-size Ontario city) as "one of North America's most accessible cities" with the "leading edge" approach taken to the planning and designing of the "Urban Braille" system (Tomic, 2003, p. 41).

Exploring accessibility planning and the innovative practices of mid-size Canadian municipalities to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities is both feasible and worthwhile. In this relatively young field, there is knowledge to

be gained in order to address the practical implications of creating more accessible and liveable communities.

1.1 Purpose of Research

The purpose of this study is to examine the state of accessibility planning within mid-size (population 50,000-500,000) Canadian municipalities. Knowledge acquired will be applied to understand the effectiveness of various practices and to inform Canadian Planning practice. In this research, accessibility planning refers to the actions taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers (physical or other) in municipal initiatives or programs that affect persons with disabilities (Personal communication with Ministry of Citizenship official, 2004).

There appears to be no single definition for mid-size city (MSC) (Legault, 2005). Statistics Canada (2003) defines Census Divisions (CDs) that have an urban settlement population of 50,000 or more as Metropolitan, while those with a population of 50,000 or less as Non-Metropolitan. This is further separated into three categories of small metro (50,000 to 249,999 people), mid-size metro (250,000-999,999), and major metro (one million or more people).

The University of Waterloo's Centre for Core Area Research and Design (CCARD) and Mid-Size City Research Centre define an MSC as Census Subdivisions (CSD) with a population between 50,000 and 500,000 (Seasons, 2003). According to the 2001 Census Dictionary, CSD, a term determined by

provincial legislation, “is the general term for municipalities or areas treated as municipal equivalents for statistical purposes” (Statistics Canada, 2001, “Geographic Units”, 2002, para.2). For the purposes of this research, the CSD is used to define the number of MSCs because it includes only statistical data for the city proper and not the outlying areas, which is reported by Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) or Census Agglomeration (CA) data.

“Disability” will be defined by using the most recent World Health Organization (WHO) framework of disability provided by the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). The ICF is a widely used international framework for measuring health and disability at both individual and population levels (WHO, 2002). This framework, adopted by Statistics Canada’s Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2001 (PALS, 2001), defines disability as “the relationship between body structures and functions, daily activities and social participation, while recognizing the role of environmental factors” (Statistics Canada, 2001, p. 24). Unanimously endorsed by the 191 Member states of the ICF in 2001, the framework “rejects the view that disability is a defining feature of a separate minority group of people” (WHO, 2002, p.3). The ICF acknowledges rather that for many people with disabilities, the attainment of health and the ability to live life to its fullest potential depend on societal factors. Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director General of the WHO, in her opening remarks at the WHO Conference on Health and Disability, 2002, provided the following example to illustrate this view of health and disability:

“When a person in a wheelchair finds it difficult to enter into her office building because it does not provide ramps or elevators, the ICF identifies the focus of an intervention: it is the building that should be modified and not the person who should be forced to find a different place of work.” (WHO, 2002, p.3).

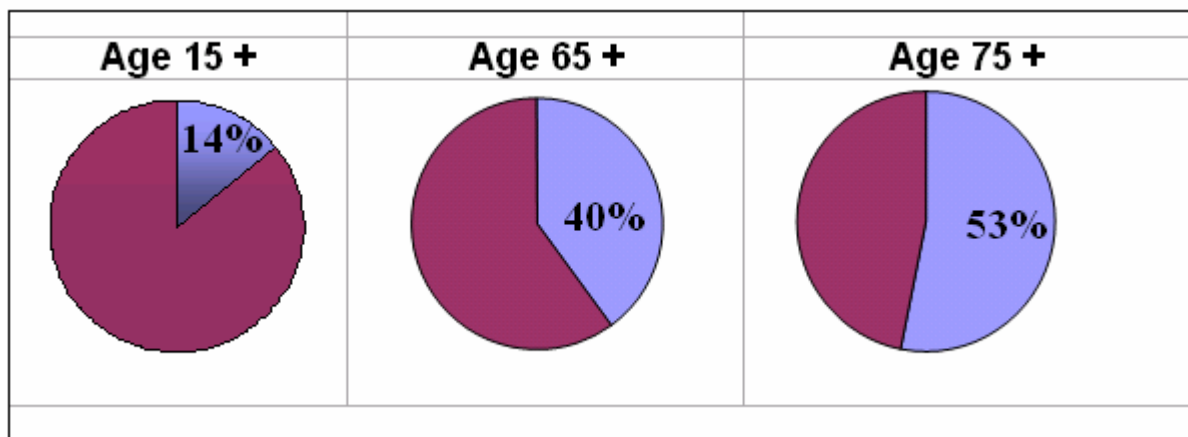
1.2 Significance of Research

This research is important for several reasons. Demographics indicate that one out of every seven Canadians, or 14 % of the Canadian population over the age of 15 years (3.4 million people) living in households, reported having some level of disability in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2001). (See Figure 1). Additionally, the PALS (2001) results confirm the increasing prevalence of disability in our aging society with both disability and severity of disability gradually increasing with age. More than 40% of persons aged 65 and over and more than half (53.3%) of persons aged 75 and over report having a disability (Statistics Canada, 2001). The prevalence of most types of disabilities also increases with age according to the PALS (2001) findings with a strong predominance of disabilities related to mobility, agility, hearing, vision and pain (Statistics Canada, 2001). In fact, more than seven of every ten persons with disabilities have difficulties related to mobility (Statistics Canada, 2001, p.18).

As most persons with disabilities reside in the community, and can encounter accessibility barriers in the company of family members, friends and others, these statistics indicate that there is the potential to affect millions of Canadians. Additionally, persons with disabilities are as diverse as Canadian society as a

whole – disability crosses lines of age, sex, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic background (Wright, 2001). Canadians with disabilities consume a variety of products and services and it is estimated that the combined annual income of working-age Canadians with disabilities is about \$25 billion (Ministry of Citizenship, 2005). Bill Wilkerson, Co-Founder and President of the Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health in “The Business Case For Accessibility: How Accessibility-Awareness Strengthens Your Company’s Bottom Line” asserts: “Collectively people with disabilities represent massive direct and indirect spending power, even though large subgroups of people with disabilities struggle with poverty because of difficulties finding employment” (Wilkerson, 2001, p.9.). Decision-makers will be obliged to address barriers to accessibility as both a policy and economic issue.

Figure 1 Percentage of Canadians with Disabilities



Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2001 (PALS 2001)

The practical implications of this research deserve note. Gleeson (1999), in a review of the literature, indicates that several studies have concluded that it is

common for persons with disabilities to face similar barriers to access in a variety of different settings. Examples of physical barriers present in cities of all sizes can include inadequate provision of curb ramping, lack of designated parking spaces, and inaccessible transportation services. Therefore the recommendations of this study have the potential to be generalized and extended beyond the scope of mid-size cities, as all municipalities have primary responsibility in the planning, development and delivery of services, construction of facilities and design of environments. Publication of innovative and noteworthy practices makes them available to professionals and others in various jurisdictions, enhancing accessibility planning practices in communities, while contributing to both the relatively young and emerging field of academic research in accessibility planning in cities and in the MSC research agenda.

Thesis Structure

The following four chapters present the research and how it addresses the primary and secondary research questions.

Chapter Two reviews the research literature related to the evolution of accessibility planning, the conceptualization of disability, the more focussed area of municipal accessibility planning, accessibility legislation policy and practice, and stakeholders involved in creating accessible cities. This chapter also reviews the area of human geography and disability. Chapter Three describes the research design and methods selected to examine the state of accessibility

planning in mid-size municipalities. Chapter Four presents the research findings in five key areas – General Accessibility Planning, Key Stakeholders Involved in Accessibility Planning, Conditions Affecting Accessibility Planning, Municipal Ratings of Accessibility Planning and “In Your Opinion” – Feedback of Municipal Staff with a summary of key findings of the study. Chapter Five completes the thesis by offering conclusions and recommendations for action and for additional research with respect to accessibility planning in mid-size municipalities.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview of the literature related to the evolution of accessibility planning, the conceptualization of disability, the more focussed area of municipal accessibility planning, accessibility legislation, policy and practice and stakeholders involved in creating accessible cities. This chapter also reviews the area of human geography and disability.

2.1 Evolution of Accessibility Planning

As discussed in the Introduction, a new understanding of disability emerged in the 1970's as a result of a fundamental societal paradigm shift. At around the same time, the earliest recognition of the issue of accessible environments appeared in the architecture literature. Architects were called upon to play a significant role in breaking down barriers that limit a person's ability to integrate and fully participate in society. However, much of the literature in this field has focused upon investigating the extent and role of the design of "disabling environments" in community settings involving actual case studies exploring environmental accessibility.

Criticisms of this approach to research have suggested that there has been a tendency to limit the discussion and research findings to problems solely attributed to the inaccessibility of the built environment, and technical and design adaptations (Imrie and Hall, 2001). A significant volume of research has been

conducted in this area. This has included design research dedicated to barrier free design, universal design, inclusive design, design-for-all, environmental design and the recent area of sustainable design¹. One author supports this criticism by noting that there has been a rise of interest recently in disability within the architectural, planning, and geography academic realms; however the research has not been established within a social theory and context of disability (Gleeson, 2001). Gleeson (2001) contends, therefore, that the analyses from these research works remain isolated from each other, rather than integrated into a critical dissertation.

Recent research in Great Britain has been guided by a more mixed socially constructed perspective by exploring architects' views of designing for persons with disabilities within the research context of the socio-economic, political and ideological relations of architectural theories and practice. Imrie (1999, 2001) conducted research on architectural practices and disabling design in the built environment in the United Kingdom. This research was designed to better understand social exclusion in the built environment through the examination of the interrelationship between architects' values and attitudes towards the building needs of persons with disabilities. The research findings indicated a strong relationship between individual architects' values, attitudes and perceptions of persons with disabilities, and the ability to construct built environments to meet the diverse needs of persons with disabilities (Imrie, 1999; 2001).

¹ See Glossary in Appendix A for a definition of terms used in this thesis.

2.2 Conceptualization of Disability

Social models of disability discussed in the literature include structuralist, humanist, idealist and normalization models (Gleeson, 1999). The *structuralist* framework narrows the complete experience of disability to broader social phenomena such as economic, cultural or political systems or institutional practices. Critics of this model believe that it overlooks and denies the place the human body plays in shaping an individual's social experience and in society. *Humanism* is another social model that is currently popular with disability activists and commonly used in North American policy development. The humanistic approach favours using 'person first' language (e.g. "persons with disabilities") to stress the humanity of disabled people and replaces both individual and collective reference to people with disabilities with "less dehumanizing alternatives" (Gleeson, p.20).

The *idealistic* model that is often cited in the field of social psychology and disability studies views disability as constructed in the negative attitudes of society towards the impaired body. From this perspective, disability is understood as a negative trait that emerges from the stigmatizing interaction of members of society. In other words, people are disabled as a result of the interpretation and attitudes of others towards them. As a solution to this, idealists advocate for "attitude changing" policies and suggest persons with disabilities should strive to

meet behavioural and other norms in order gain social approval. Finally the social model of *normalization* refers to the provision of normal experiences so that persons with disabilities can maintain or develop traits or behaviours that are as close to the cultural norm as possible (Smith, Austin and Kennedy, 2001). This perspective has been favoured in Western society since the 1970's, and it has lead to the deinstitutionalization or return of persons with disabilities from institutions to the community (Gleeson, 1999). Critics of this model believe that the normalization model ignores the role of society in failing to meet the needs of persons with disabilities and lays the responsibility for abnormality within the individual.

Particular attention has been given to the *historical materialist* model of disability provided by Oliver (1990) that has been recognized in a number of disciplines, including urban planning. Oliver conceptualizes disability as a social experience, arising from the specific ways in which society organizes its basic activities (transportation, work, etc). As a result, persons with disabilities experience discrimination (“disablism”) or oppression based on their physical and mental impairments (“lacking part of or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body”) and are thereby “disabled” or “forced to endure an imposed state of exclusion or constraint” (Oliver, 1990, p.10). For example, inaccessible buildings, under funded parallel transit systems, and poorly designed housing prevent many persons with disabilities from securing gainful employment and restricting them from working where or when they want.

Disabling practices, Oliver maintains, result more from society's discriminatory attitudes and practices and less from an individual's impairment (Oliver, 1990). Young (1990) supports this position, asserting that the practices and policies of governments reinforce the dependent position of persons with disabilities in society. This theory has been applied in a limited manner to the research dedicated to municipal planning and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

2.3 Municipal Planning and Persons with Disabilities

Empirical research in two studies in Great Britain (which is a world leader in disabled persons research) has focused on access and planning (Imrie, 1996), and more specifically the role of the local land use planning system to secure accessibility provisions for persons with disabilities (Imrie and Wells, 1993).

Results from these and other studies indicate that most planners narrowly define disability as "people in wheelchairs" and are unaware of the local demand for accessible environments (Imrie, 1996, 1999). Secondly, it is common for planners to link accessibility issues to market opportunities – i.e. convincing developers that it makes good business sense to create accessible developments (Imrie and Hall, 2001).

Additionally, access provisions were most often developed as an after thought often allocated to a planner by default, with "widespread ignorance amongst

planners about planning for persons with disabilities” (Imrie and Wells, 1993, p.228). Indeed, the majority of local planning authorities interviewed by Imrie and Wells (1993) did not feel they could use their powers to secure access provisions for persons with disabilities. This included a reluctance to use their local (Official) plan or attach any planning conditions to development applications in order to promote accessibility. Most of the research sample interviewed summarized these findings by indicating “there was not a deliberate antipathy to the disabled”, but more lack of time, resources and awareness to address access issues (Imrie and Wells, 1993, p.220).

The authors of these studies asserted that while accessibility issues were perhaps more visible in UK local planning authorities in recent years, accessibility issues overall remained outside of the primary work of the departments, a low priority with limited funds, and with few authorities attempting to develop access budgets to address and develop access policies (Imrie, 1996). Imrie and Wells (1993) recommend further nation-wide study in order to document access practices and policies and the effectiveness of various planning instruments used to gain access for persons with disabilities by local planning authorities.

To date, there is little accessibility planning research available in Canada. However, recent theses in Canada include the role of the municipal planner (Barrett, 1996) and interesting participatory research in Toronto produced a statement for inclusion in the City of Toronto Official Plan (2001) of planning

principles designed to guide the development of “barrier free” environments (Holten, 2001).

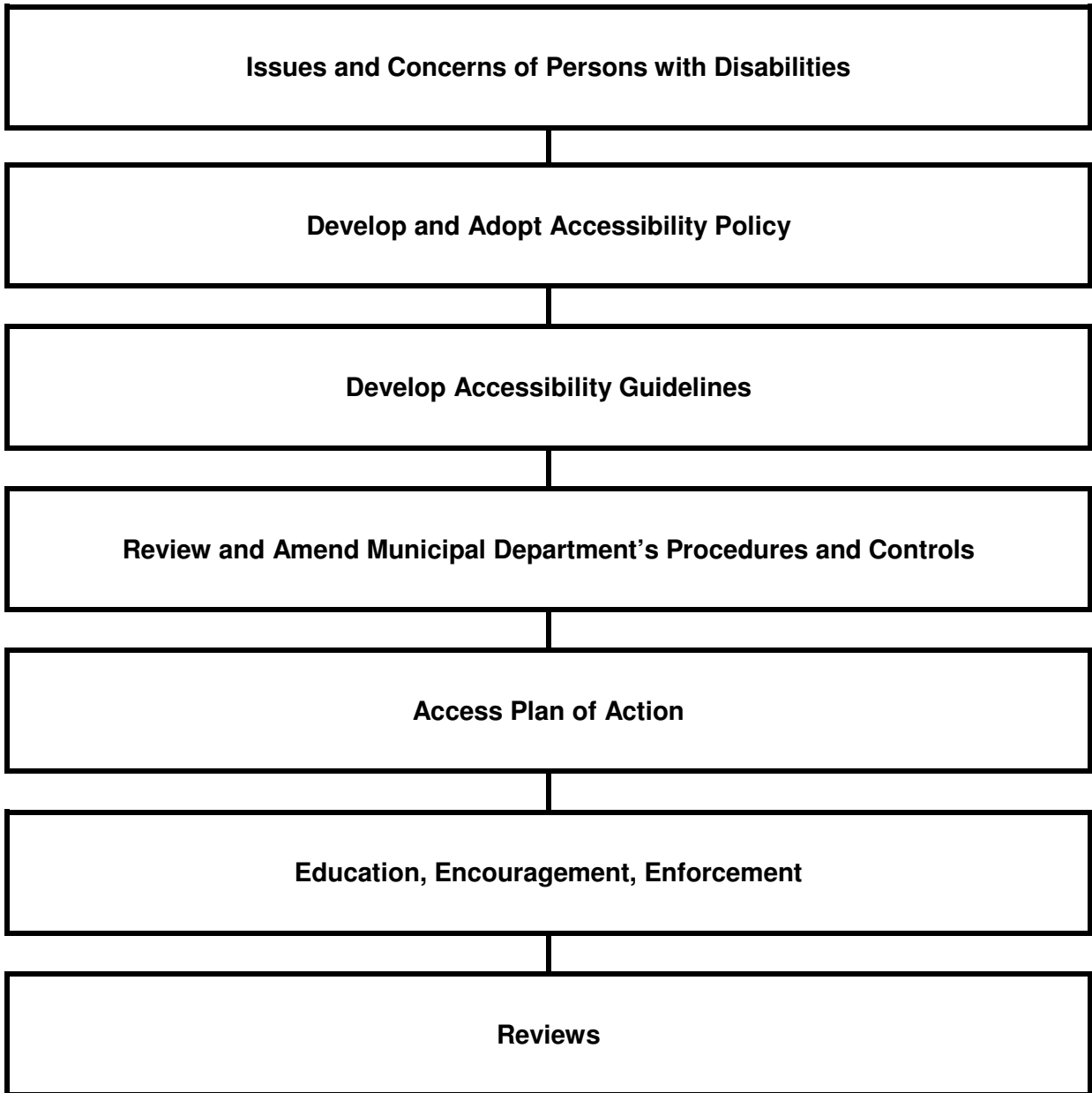
Barrett’s thesis intended to “identify a need and establish a method for addressing the aspects of the street which affect the use of the street for persons with disabilities” (Barrett, 1996, p.1). This involved an accessibility survey in a community in Nova Scotia, which identified numerous barriers that persons with disabilities encounter within the street right-of-way. In order to learn from existing approaches taken by other communities, follow-up studies were undertaken in Toronto and Peterborough to identify key elements and stakeholders used to address accessibility issues for persons with disabilities.

Barrett’s research guided the creation of a framework for Accessibility Planning (Figure 2) through defining the roles that planning departments (specifically municipal planners) should undertake to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities (Barrett, 1996). According to Barrett, the planner may undertake various roles from “technician administrator” (p.93) to “social learner” (p.94) to “advocate” (p.94) or a combination of these and other roles as s/he progresses through a series of steps to improve municipal accessibility for persons with disabilities. The process begins with the identification of issues and concerns of this group of citizens (Barrett, 1996, p.96).

More specifically, Barrett's model documented the chronological use of three key planning tools by planners – the initial creation of a municipal accessibility policy, development of guidelines for accessibility, and the review and amendment of municipal controls (i.e. zoning by-laws and sidewalk replacement programs in the city core) in order to improve accessibility for persons with a disability (Barrett, 1996). A plan of action is then created, followed by ongoing education, encouragement and enforcement and finally a review of the municipal accessibility planning process.

The various roles and the continuous involvement of persons with disabilities, planners and other city staff and the general public are key to the success of Barrett's framework. If Barrett's work is to be criticized, it may be that his research focuses predominantly on the role of the municipal planner and the use of planning tools. Barrett's research tends to overlook the indispensable participation and involvement of persons with disabilities throughout all steps in the municipal planning process ("doing with not doing for").

Figure 2 Barrett's Framework for Municipal Accessibility Planning



Source: Barrett (1996, p. 121)

More recent participatory action research carried out by the City of Toronto has focused upon the use of the Official Plan with the production of a document entitled “Planning a Barrier-Free City of Toronto – A Statement of Planning Principles” (Holten, 2001). This document was produced in response to a request from the Urban Planning and Development Services Department (City of Toronto) to contribute content to both a vision statement of the City of Toronto Official Plan and the Official Plan. The document (based upon consultation and research with a broad range of stakeholders) presents a framework for planning policy development by the City of Toronto and 12 “Planning Principles” (Table 1) to guide the development of the City of Toronto Official Plan.

Table 1 Twelve Planning Principles

| Twelve Planning Principles to Guide the Development of the City of Toronto Official Plan | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Principle # 1 | Empower people with disabilities as found in the objectives of the 'active' and 'independent' living movements; and |
| Principle #2 | Establish proactive public education programs to eliminate misconceptions of people with disabilities held by society at large. |
| Principle #3 | Change existing barrier-free 'guidelines' into enforceable policy. |
| Principle #4 | Incorporate universal design principles into the planning, design and development stages of the land development process. |
| Principle #5 | Provide up to date information, training and continuing education for City staff in order to increase their awareness and understanding of the needs of people with disabilities. |
| Principle #6 | Regular and ongoing collaboration with the Toronto Joint Citizen's Committee for People with Disabilities (TJCC) and related community organizations in order to be informed on current and future research into best practices related to barrier-free design of the built environment. |
| Principle #7 | Audit of existing barriers within internal and external built environments. |
| Principle #8 | Development of public transportation policy that is inclusive of the needs of people with disabilities and seniors. |
| Principle #9 | Develop a prioritized work schedule of street, sidewalk and intersection upgrades (e.g. curb cuts) based on direct consultation with people with disabilities and seniors. |
| Principle #10 | Development housing policy that incorporates characteristics of adaptable, universal and flexible housing design. |
| Principle #11 | Establish an ongoing partnership between the City and all community organizations focused on providing barrier free access to recreational facilities, services and programs for persons with disabilities. |
| Principle #12 | Include policy within the Official plan to remedy communication barriers in City services and access to information in order to prevent further discrimination. |

Source: Holten, 2001

Of particular interest is the use of planning instruments and policy to the removal of physical and other barriers in the built environment presented in this report. Indeed, the inclusive framework of the 12 “Planning Principles” may be considered a “new approach to planning and urban design” (Holten, 2001, p. 11). Principles Three and Four within the document support changing the existing City of Toronto barrier-free guidelines for accessibility into enforceable policy and the incorporation of universal design principles² in the planning, design and development stages of the land development process (Holten, 2001). Additionally, a number of the recommendations address barriers other than physical (communication, attitudinal, architectural, etc.). However, one recommendation (Planning Principle #12) recommends the inclusion of policy within the Official Plan to correct communication barriers (availability of corporate information in alternate formats) in City services and provide access to information. This is the only principle of the twelve planning principles in the document to clearly address the specific inclusion of policy within the City of Toronto Official Plan.

According to Holten (2001, p.7), the Official Plan of the City of Toronto provides “the policy framework that determines the degree to which existing barriers faced by persons with disabilities will be removed and the creation of new ones will be prevented.” Holten’s research concludes with a Council resolution (2000) recommending that the City of Toronto “...commit to the implementation of the

² The Principles of Universal Design are presented in the Glossary in Appendix A.

accessibility principles” outlined in the document” (Holten, 2001, p.60). Six years later, there has been no further follow-up research to determine if the principles have been extrapolated to tangible actions or action plans within the City of Toronto Planning Department or other municipal departments.

2.4 Accessibility Legislation, Policy and Practice

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, rights-specific legislation has been mandated at various levels of government to remove barriers and improve the lives of persons with disabilities. Various other pieces of legislation are also available to remove both physical and other barriers to persons with disabilities. In Canada, this legislation includes provincial building codes which regulate the construction of new facilities, renovations, and specific outdoor facilities (Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2005). In Ontario, the Planning Act was recently revised to include accessibility as “a provincial interest” and to incorporate revisions to Section 2, 51(24) and 41 following the passage of provincial accessibility legislation (ODA, 2001) aimed specifically at removing barriers of all types to persons with disabilities. The Province of Québec passed similar accessibility planning legislation in 2005.

To date, research has not been undertaken in Canada to measure the effectiveness of these various pieces of accessibility legislation. However, an evaluation of the effectiveness of accessibility regulation, in particular compliance

with accessibility legislation at the local (or municipal level) and factors affecting municipal government compliance with legislation, has been undertaken in recent years in both New Zealand and the United States. This research is worthy of discussion because it provides some conclusions that are transferable or relevant to the Canadian context.

Research undertaken by Gleeson (Gleeson, 1999) in New Zealand involved a case study of the City of Dunedin, New Zealand which had a population at that time of approximately 120,000 people. Gleeson's research sought to identify some of the compliance problems with accessibility legislation (specifically regulations that have been passed to improve the accessibility of persons with disabilities to the built environment) that occur in cities and to develop key questions to inform further research in this area. The primary data source for the City of Dunedin research was a set of interviews held with twenty people (including several persons with disabilities) who were knowledgeable about the New Zealand Building Act 1991 (BA) and the New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993 (HRA) - accessibility legislation in New Zealand.

This study confirmed that accessibility regulations put in place to improve accessibility in this city were "failing to address the mobility needs of persons with disabilities in that city" (Gleeson, 1999, p.193). Both non-compliance (i.e. building owners and business people were not complying with regulations and saw access regulations as a cost burden to avoid), and lack of enforcement (i.e.

regulations put in place to improve accessibility were not being fully enforced in the city) issues were evident from the research. The scope and scale of these problems was not made clear in this research. Gleeson does suggest, however, that the source of the problems with compliance with access regulations may be part of larger socio-economic issues such as tension between the local business economy and access regulations, cost cutting measures and entrepreneurialism leading to the watering down of access regulations (Gleeson, 1999). Gleeson goes further to suggest that the problems experienced in Dunedin may be common in other regional and national contexts. However, he asserts that it will be necessary to undertake comparative empirical research in Western countries to enable generalized comparisons of compliance/enforcement with accessibility legislation. Gleeson claims this will contribute to making accessibility regulations more effective in Western cities.

Although not specific solely to planning or access regulations to the built environment, but rather broader accessibility planning, civil rights legislation in the United States, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (Title II) has sought to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability within all local (municipal) government services, programs and activities, including employment (Vaughn Switzer, 2001). It is this particular legislation that has set the framework for a research study (from 1997 to 1999) to identify factors that affect local government compliance with the ADA (Title II) in 20 cities in two states in the USA. From the 20 sample cities, 10 cities were chosen for further analysis and

became the focus for the research. The study identified nine common factors that affect local government implementation and compliance of the legislation (Vaughn Switzer, 2001) (See Table 2).

Table 2 Common Factors Affecting Implementation of Legislation

| Factors that Affect Local Government Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position of the ADA Co-ordinator within the Municipal Power Structure • Awareness among Municipal Staff about the requirements of the Law • Training for Municipal Staff at each level of Service • Participation and Input from Disabled Persons • Focus, Leadership, and Composition of Citizen Commissions • Financial Resources • Co-ordination and Interaction with Other Municipalities • Interaction or Interest on the Part of Elected Officials • Knowledge about the Number of Disabled Persons within the Community or the Services Needed by those Persons |

Source: Vaughn Switzer, 2001, page 657-660.

One of the most important findings of this study concerns the interest and position of the ADA Coordinator. Vaughn Switzer (2001) noted that within progressive municipalities, the effectiveness of legislative implementation and compliance was due in a large part to the interest and position within the municipal hierarchy of the ADA Coordinator. In one municipality where “the Mayor had a personal interest in disability issues”, the ADA Coordinator was able to effectively move forward with implementation efforts (Vaughn Switzer, 2001, p. 657). However, a coordinator in a municipality in a low-level staff position (little or

no visibility or political clout), or authority to make decisions was unable to get issues off the desk of her immediate supervisor (Vaughn Switzer, 2001).

Additionally, this study confirmed that legislative compliance in the most progressive cities is the responsibility of a Coordinator with an interest in disability issues, and who has the ability to make decisions, combined with the support and input of the disability community. (Vaughn Switzer, 2001). The progressive cities that are making headway with legislative compliance have disability/access committees which take a broad interpretation of their role beyond issues of physical/architectural accessibility to include issues of access to all programs and services. In contrast, cities that were struggling to move forward with legislative compliance were often hampered by committees which lacked focus (i.e. attempted to respond to all kinds of issues), struggled with leadership (favouring of one disability group over another), or were ineffective due to lack of active membership (Vaughn Switzer, 2001). These problems included committee membership that reflected poor attendance (including only limited participation by one or two elected officials), unwillingness by members to criticize the city for fear of losing their politically appointed positions, and a feeling by members of tokenism within their “advisory” capacity (Vaughn Switzer, 2001).

Finally, Vaughn Switzer (2001) determined in the early findings of the study that none of the 20 cities had any data about the number of persons with disabilities living within the cities, nor had they undertaken a needs inventory to establish the

priority of those services required by those same persons. This has occurred because there is no single, established method in the U.S. of estimating the number of persons with disabilities because of the lack of agreement of an explicit definition of “disability” and what comprises a disability (Vaughn Switzer, 2001).

The second problem identified by Vaughn Switzer – knowing the services needed by persons with disabilities – is even more important because knowing the services needed by persons with disabilities influences where valuable municipal dollars will be spent. However, rather than undertaking an inclusive approach and involving persons with disabilities in the implementation of the legislation the majority of the cities provided services based upon ignorance and stereotyping of persons with disabilities. Vaughn Switzer (2001, p. 660) noted that the majority of cities in her research “viewed the ADA as a something that gives a group ‘special rights’ similar to the debate over the rights of gays and lesbians.”

Examining Accessibility Planning in Mid-Size Canadian Municipalities

The Vaughn Switzer (2001) study presented a number of compelling findings in the area of staffing, participation of persons with disabilities, and municipal service delivery to persons with disabilities as they relate to the compliance of local U.S. governments to ADA legislation. I was inspired by this North American research. I saw its applicability to the Canadian mid-size local government setting, adapted the research framework, and modified and transposed eight of

the nine common factors in order to establish the context of this current thesis examining accessibility planning in Canadian mid-size municipalities.

Additionally, I developed the secondary research questions and some survey questions from my review of this study.

2.5 Stakeholders Involved In Creating Accessible Cities

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities, municipal staff, officials and others are involved in removing barriers to persons with disabilities and improving the accessibility of cities. Of these stakeholders, the research literature in this area consistently addresses the fundamental importance of the upfront involvement of persons with disabilities or the “user as expert” in the removal of barriers to their participation (Ostroff, 1997). In the universal design literature, a user/expert is defined as “anyone who has developed natural experience in dealing with the challenges of our built environment” (Ostroff, 1997, p.1). The experience of the “user as expert”, Ostroff (1997) contends, is usually in contrast to the life experience of most design professionals and is invaluable in evaluating products and places as well as evaluating designs in development. Vaughn Switzer (2001) has noted that in terms of municipal accessibility planning, the most common method of involving persons with disabilities and ensuring their participation and input has been the establishment of municipal commissions (committees) on disability. This involvement, however, is not without challenges.

Several studies have indicated that persons with disabilities are often in a disadvantaged position in society because they have lower educational and income levels (Barnes 1991; Shakespeare, 1998). Additionally, Imrie (1996, p.18) has noted that persons with disabilities “are also amongst the poorest members of society while they are conspicuous by their absence from all positions of socio-institutional power.” As a result, it can be very difficult for persons with disabilities to organize politically or become involved in efforts to remove barriers inhibiting their participation in society.

Additionally, research suggests that disability is not a “common experience.” For example, one cannot make the assumption that all persons who use wheelchairs are the same or have the same needs. As Imrie (1999, p.464) has asserted, “there is often more that divides than unites disabled people.” This may include differing physical states, the living situations or restrictions thereof of some persons with disabilities (home or institutional settings), or divisions or diversity within “disabled communities.” For example, there can be a division between the “mainstream” community of persons who are deaf, and the community of gay and lesbian persons who are deaf. As a result of these complicating factors, there is a longstanding belief within the literature that when persons with disabilities attempt to organize politically in groups, their attempts are often ineffective, fragmented, and inadequately funded (Imrie, 1999).

Imrie (1999) has argued that despite this inability to effectively influence larger political issues, people with disabilities have the capacity to influence both policies and practices connected to disability, and to local planning practices and policies through participation in access groups (Imrie, 1999). Based upon case study research in England of two contrasting access groups, Imrie concludes that the ability of access groups to influence local municipal planning practices and policies is connected to the degree of support afforded by the local planning authority to the group. In the municipality where the access group is supported politically and otherwise, access issues are a feature in the local planning authority policies, and disability issues are integral to the process of policy development in the planning authority (Imrie, 1999).

Municipal Staff

Research from the UK by Imrie and Wells (1993) addressed the role of “Access Officers” (the British equivalent of an Accessibility / Disability Co-ordinator in a North American municipality) who are responsible for both access issues in local planning authorities, and for fostering the development of access groups that would represent the interests of disabled persons within the planning system. The study surveyed nine local planning authorities in Wales in order to determine how far both staffing and the development of access groups improved accessibility issues faced by persons with disabilities. A number of interesting findings emerged from this research with respect to the location of the officer within the authority, the employment status (part time vs. full time) of the officer and the responsibilities of the officer within the authority (Imrie and Wells, 1993).

Some general conclusions can be drawn from the research. First, if the Access Officer was located within a specific department (such as building code enforcement), it was possible that accessibility for persons with disabilities would be seen narrowly as internal building design and not considered as integral to all functions of the planning authority (Imrie and Wells, 1993). Second, the allocation of only part-time staff to the area of accessibility affected the level and quality of service provision (Imrie and Wells, 1993). However, even when full-time staff resources were allocated, the access duties were often in addition to the main job requirements, thereby causing access issues to be handled in a reactive manner by staff who were poorly trained or virtually untrained in accessibility issues concerning persons with disabilities (Imrie and Wells, 1993).

Two examples were provided to illustrate that authorities can take alternative yet equally effective approaches to the staffing of Access Officers. Both authorities were in large urban areas that had a notable volume of new urban development. In the first authority, a full-time Access Officer was appointed in a “cross-departmental” capacity, acting as a resource to all departments within the authority. The second authority worked within the framework of a defined municipal policy of improving access to persons with disabilities and all planning staff was expected to apply accessibility criteria when making development decisions. Clearly, the second municipality felt that responsibility for accessibility issues did not fall solely on one particular staff person (planner). A key factor noted by the researchers in the study of these two authorities and the placement

of their Access Officers was that both of these planning authorities had active access committees/groups which met regularly with planners (Imrie and Wells, 1993).

Imrie and Wells (1993) found significant variation in terms of the responsibilities of the Access Officer within the authority. The full-time Access Officer in the case study above had a broad and proactive mandate to address access for persons with disabilities in all aspects of the environment of the municipal offices and to “promote equality of opportunity for disabled people” (Imrie and Wells, 1993, p.223). However, they found that in a number of cases in those municipalities with part-time Access Officers, there was no clear understanding of the role of the Officer and a perception that access is an “afterthought” or an add-on to the main work of the planning department (Imrie and Wells, 1993).

2.6 Human Geography

This chapter would not be complete without a discussion of the emergence of a relatively new area of geography – “human geography.” A review of the literature has indicated that, until recently, there has been limited study of disability or the accessibility or movement of persons with disabilities in the environment.

Recently, however, interest has arisen in the area of “human geography”, in particular geography and physical disability and geography and mental health,(Park, Radford and Vickers, 1998).

Research in this area belongs in two broad categories. The first category focuses heavily on quantitative methods of statistical analysis associated with traditional medical geography – e.g. epidemiological studies of diseases related to certain disabilities or examples of statistical mapping of diseases or disability (Park, Radford and Vickers, 1998). An example of the early research in this area is the mapping of the rates of the prevalence of MS (multiple sclerosis) by Mayer (1981, p.210) who looked for geographical “clues” of various locations and the associated occurrence of this disease. This research, although considered necessary to assist with health and disease reduction measures, has been criticized by disability movement activists as aligned with the biomedical model of disability framework which neglects the social or political issue of disability in favour of capturing the “problem of disability as primarily one of a medical or scientific nature” (Park, Radford and Vickers, 1998, p. 210).

An additional area of inquiry in this area uses the needs assessment approach to focus on how public services are delivered to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Research in this area focuses primarily on public transportation services to these target groups (Park, Radford and Vickers, 1998). The earliest research in this area by geographers Perle (1969) and Kirby et al. (1983) examined the issues of mobility of persons with physical disabilities in urban areas (Park, Radford and Vickers, 1988).

The second and more recent category of research - cultural geography - has approached disability and disability issues from the perspective of social theory, specifically the conceptualization of disability. This research has considered how the built environment can serve to “dis-able” people (Park, Radford and Vickers, 1998). Human geographers have examined how physical structures in society create barriers to the full participation of persons with disabilities in society, and the association of these barriers to disablism inherent in public policy. They studied how these barriers can result from disabling public policy and are ultimately an infringement of the human rights of persons with disabilities (Park, Radford and Vickers, 1998). Innovative research has been undertaken in recent years looking at questions about the disabling built environment and the exclusion of disabled persons as rights base infractions.

Park, Radford and Vickers note that this research:

“Has sought to move beyond the description of persons with disabilities or the general implications of urban design or policy on accessibility to attempting to encompass the experiences of disabled people themselves, their perceptions of their environments, as well as their political struggles, efforts to organize and to create a sense of community and identity” (Park, Radford and Vickers, 1998, p. 210).

Research in this area has included participatory action research on issues of accessibility in the built environment. Matthews and Vujakovic (1995) used the direct knowledge of persons with physical disabilities to generate maps of the degree of accessibility of the city centre (i.e. the city of Coventry, England). This project was based upon earlier concepts advanced by architects Lifchez and Winslow (1979) in their attempt to design more accessible environments. This concept assumes “...the environmental needs of physically disabled people are complex and not readily understood by able-bodied people who do not have direct interaction with them” (Lifchez and Winslow, 1979, p.129).

According to Vujakovic and Matthews (1994), the underlying premise of this research is that it is not enough for geographers to observe the problems encountered by persons with specific disabilities as they encounter barriers in their environment. They must seek to understand or empathize with the user’s image of the environment. Vujakovic and Matthews (1994) argue that geographers need to put aside “the views and values they hold for themselves in order to enter another’s world without prejudice” (see also Lifchez and Winslow, 1979, p.129).

If geographers are unable to do this, they will transfer their own personal values and meanings into the product (in this case maps of the accessibility to the city centre) and not those of the potential users. The aim of the Coventry Access and Mobility Mapping Project was to identify the perceptions and attitudes of wheelchair users towards a city-centre environment. The project began as a weekend workshop pilot exercise with the intention to have students live in the world of persons with physical disabilities and wheelchair users. This exercise evolved into a broader research project over a period of years. The research methodology was selected deliberately in order to reflect the cognitive maps or “personal geographies” – values, feelings of frustration and concern of wheelchair users (Matthews and Vujakovic, 1995). These were then integrated into the survey and design stages of accessibility and mobility maps of the city centre.

The project consisted of three main phases involving both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Phase one involved three interactive mapping and “barrier identification” exercises and a larger scale environmental exploration of the city centre with teams of two members each (one wheelchair user and one geographer). Phase two involved “mobility mapping” based upon areas of use by wheelchair users. And Phase three was the creation of a mobility index and detailed profile of the city centre based upon the perceptions of wheelchair users.

It is beyond the scope of this literature review to present the details of each of the exercises and the final environmental exploration (production of a mobility index and detailed cartographic map of the city centre). However, findings from this research can illustrate the importance of involving persons with disabilities or potential users of the environment rather than solely professionals, such as urban planners, geographers or others who have little or no direct experience of physical disability (Matthews and Vujakovic, 1995).

Maps produced by wheelchair users were more detailed, clearly indicating the types of barriers or mobility restrictions. Additionally, it became evident from this map creation exercise that the environmental knowledge of participants was limited to an area of the city they could access – in this case, the city centre (perceived as accessible with some limitations). When participants were asked to amass a list of all the barriers or restrictions to mobility and access they thought they could encounter in a *typical* city centre, wheelchair users averaged just a slightly higher number of barriers than geographers. One consistent barrier noted by all participants was the “lack of drop kerbs [curbs].” Matthews and Vujakovic point out that steps were only mentioned by two wheelchair users, but this barrier was identified by all of the geographers.

The researchers believed that many wheelchair users would develop routes in their daily travels in order to avoid flights of steps; therefore this barrier was obvious and would not be important to record. “Kerbs” (curbs), however, are

encountered by wheelchair users everywhere in cities and avoiding them may just not be possible (Matthews and Vujakovic, 1995). The researchers believe that the lesson learned from this exercise illustrates the importance of an individual's experience and perception of barriers and restrictions. Steps were a "perceived barrier" noted by geographers; however, curbs from the viewpoint of wheelchair users were a constant and real barrier inhibiting mobility. This exercise also illustrated the wide variation in barrier types of factors perceived to restrict access. Barriers listed ranged from noticeable physical barriers (steps) to social barriers such as prohibitive regulations restricting access to wheelchair users claiming safety reasons (Matthews and Vujakovic, 1995).

Following the environmental exploration of the city and the creation of a mobility index, both wheelchair users and geographers acknowledged that they had revised their individual perceptions. Wheelchair users indicated a greater awareness of the issues of design and planning affecting the lives of persons with disabilities while geographers acquired "a deeper appreciation and understanding" of the mobility problems encountered by wheelchair users in the city (Vujakovic and Matthews, 1994, p.367).

The Coventry Access and Mobility Mapping Project concluded that the direct involvement of persons with disabilities and the recognition of their "personal geographies" vary greatly and are in contrast to other users of the city centre. Implications of this are significant. The design of city centres and other urban

settings can in fact exclude and further disenfranchise persons with disabilities and other groups if not carefully planned. Matthews and Vujakovic (1995) believe geographers and others have a significant contribution to eliminating barriers of understanding and effecting change in the planning of city and urban spaces.

2.7 Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature in the field of planning for persons with disabilities. The literature clearly indicates that disability has evolved from being seen as solely a medical condition, to one where disability is conceptualized as resulting from inaccessible environments and associated “disabling” public policy. The planning literature from Britain and Canada confirms that various planning tools are used in the land use planning system to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and remove physical barriers. However, planners struggle to incorporate accessibility planning practices in their daily responsibilities. Accessibility regulations have been identified in the literature as one method of addressing the removal of physical and other barriers to the accessibility of persons with disabilities.

Research in New Zealand has shown the struggle and failure in some situations of using accessibility regulations to remove physical barriers and legislate accessible environments. The use of broader “civil rights” legislation (ADA) in the U.S. has taken a look at the “bigger picture” of how certain key factors may contribute to legislative implementation and compliance by local governments to

remove discriminatory practices within municipal services, programs and activities.

Research by both Imrie (2001) and Vaughn Switzer (1999) includes discussion about the importance of the participation of persons with disabilities, their role, and struggle to remove barriers to accessibility in both land use planning and other municipal areas. The discussion is complete with a review of studies addressing the place of municipal staff and their ability to effect change within local planning systems and municipal governments. The final section of this chapter presents a review of the emergence of the field of human geography. Participatory action research from Britain in human geography that involved persons with physical disabilities documents this relatively new area of geography and its importance for urban planners, geographers and others.

The next chapter will describe the methodology undertaken in order to meet the purpose of the study and answer the research questions.

Chapter 3 Research Design and Methods

This chapter describes the research design and methods used to examine the state of accessibility planning in mid-size Canadian municipalities. From a planning perspective, this study is intended to provide insight into how mid-size municipalities are carrying out accessibility planning for persons with disabilities and to contribute to the emerging field of research in this area.

3.1 Primary and Secondary Research Questions

The study addressed the following lead research question: “*Are planning instruments [or other tools] being used, and how are they being used to remove barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities living in mid-size Canadian municipalities?*”

Supplementary research questions support the lead research question about planning to improve accessibility as follows:

1. What planning instruments are being used? Specifically, what are the essential planning instruments being used in the design of open space and built environments in mid-size Canadian municipalities to remove physical barriers to persons with disabilities?
2. What other tools are available to attain greater accessibility for persons with disabilities living in mid-size urban settings?

3. Who is involved (staff, community volunteers, elected officials, and/or persons with disabilities) in the implementation and use of the planning instruments and other tools? What are their roles?
4. Under what conditions (when) are planning instruments and other tools being applied? How is this determined?
5. Are financial and/or other resources allocated to implement the planning instruments and other tools? How are the resources allocated in the short and long term?

The thesis will address each question and report on lessons learned and will document innovative practices in order to add to the body of knowledge and suggest direction for future policy in this field.

3.2 Boundaries of the Study

Scope and Focus of the Study

The scope of the study encompassed mid-size Canadian cities in 2004/2005. The focus of the research was established within the boundaries of “mid-size Canadian cities”, and focused on what those municipalities are doing to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and how accessibility planning is evolving in these communities in order to document successful and innovative practices. The mid-size Canadian municipality framework (population range from 50,000-500,000) was chosen for two reasons. I have a personal interest in accessibility planning in mid-size cities because I work and reside in a mid-size Canadian city. Two municipalities have been included in the Province of Québec that fall outside the defined population boundaries of the mid-size municipality but are included in this nation-wide study.³ The rationale for the inclusion of these cities will be presented in a more detailed discussion of the research study participants/sample later in this chapter.

³ Trois-Rivieres, QC., Levis, QC.

3.3 Outline of Research Design

Research Strategy

The research strategy undertaken in this study involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In simple terms, quantitative research emphasizes quantification (numbers) in the collection and analysis of data, whereas qualitative research emphasizes words rather than numbers (quantification). Quantitative social research is a deductive approach to research and incorporates the practices of the natural scientific model (“positivism”), focused on the testing of theories and it is objective in nature. However, qualitative social research is inductive in nature, that is, theories may be generated by research. Qualitative research also acknowledges both the way in which persons interpret “their world” (“interpretivism”) and the constantly changing social reality individuals live in and create (Bryman, 2001).

I determined that a survey was the most appropriate research method to gather data for this study since it is an efficient way of collecting standardized information from a number of respondents over a short period of time and systematically comparing the responses people provided. All survey respondents were asked identical questions and their responses were categorized or “coded” for both statistical analysis of quantitative data following data collection, or creating categories from open ended questions of emerging themes and concepts (guided by the research questions) in order to analyze the qualitative

data. I chose to undertake an Internet-based survey since the cost of a traditional mail-out survey could be quite high and there was the possibility that a recipient would dismiss this type of survey;. The web-based survey was “cross-sectional” in nature - that is, it was conducted at one point in time only (three distinct survey phases in 2004 and 2005) allowing me to then examine and analyze accessibility planning in Canada during this period of time.

A web-based survey was used to collect data from staff of mid-size Canadian municipalities because this target population has computer and online network access. Web-based surveys offer a number of benefits over mail-out surveys (Colorado State University, 2002). From a cost perspective, web-based surveys are less expensive (Gray and Guppy, 2003; Palys, 2003; Neuman, 2003), thereby allowing researchers with smaller research budgets to carry out effective and informative research.

Web-based surveys also provide for wider coverage and quicker delivery of the survey to recipients and therefore are not only more financially cost efficient but are more time-efficient than mail-out surveys (Gray and Guppy, 2003). The time efficiency of web-based surveys also has implications for potentially quicker response rates with the availability of “real time” results. Researchers also gain from the use of web-based surveys because it can be easier to edit the online survey, and copy and sort data received (Colorado State University, 2002). Additional benefits of a web survey identified by software developer

Zoomerang™ are the ability of respondents to answer at will (non-intrusive) and with the assurance of privacy (anonymity) and confidentiality of email addresses and surveys, respondents may provide more honest and candid responses to questions. For some persons with disabilities, computer based instruments may be more accessible and allow for greater participation.

Web-based surveys, however, are not without their limitations. As this type of research instrument is relatively new, guarantees of higher response rates to this type of survey have not been adequately researched to determine such a claim. (Gray and Guppy, 2003). Where respondents have access to email, and Internet use is high, initial research indicates response rates fall in line with those of mail-out and telephone surveys. The population of municipal employees used for this study can, for the most part, be assumed to have access to computers with an Internet connection. Also, when strategies to increase response rates are used (e.g. reminder emails sent to recipients), there is little difference in response rates between mail-out and web-based surveys (Gray and Guppy, 2003).

The assurance of anonymity is also a realistic concern. Although the anonymity of respondents is hailed as one of the advantages of conducting web-based surveys, this can also be considered a weakness. The researcher is not able to verify “who responded to the survey, nor the seriousness with which it is being completed” (Palys, 2003, P.171). Palys also notes that this is a limitation of mail-out and other self-administered surveys.

Barriers to both online networks and software programs may also pose problems for individual survey respondents. Some individuals may be unable to participate in a web survey because of limited or no access to the Internet, or because of a technological barrier to participation (i.e. a person who is blind may have screen reading software that cannot “read” the text on the survey web site). Steps taken to overcome these limitations in this particular study are discussed when outlining the process for data collection.

Once the research framework was defined as outlined above, and the web-based survey was chosen as the research instrument, the survey was conducted in four distinct phases – the pre-test phase in preparation to launch the web survey, and the survey implementation out in the field (Phases 1 through 3).

Background Phase

In the background phase of the study, “experts” (academics, practitioners, and advocates) and colleagues of the researcher in the field of accessibility planning were contacted in order to discuss and provide feedback about the proposed purpose and nature of the research. This step helped me to ground the study in a current policy context, assess the practical applications of the study and further define the direction of the project. This developmental phase of the study did not form part of the formal research.

Pre-test Phase

In order to determine the efficacy of the web based survey instrument, a pilot test was carried out for both the English survey (2004/2005) and the French language version of the web survey (2005). The pilot English language survey was sent to three English speaking colleagues of mine (not in the survey sample). These respondents were asked to complete the survey as if they were a selected respondent and report any technical or other difficulties. The French language survey was sent to the project associate who translated the documents into French as well as an additional person in Québec subcontracted to work on this project.

The results of these pilot tests were used to refine and revise the research questions and survey format prior to broader distribution. This was an especially important step with the French language survey because I wanted to ensure the use of correct current spoken French and appropriate terminology when referring to key phrases such as “persons with disabilities” and “accessibility planning.”

Survey Phases

Phase 1 (2004)

Following the background and pre-test phases, a cross-sectional, self-administered web-based survey was sent to municipal staff in 53 mid-size Canadian municipalities between May 2004 and August 2004 to investigate their overall experience with accessibility planning (A copy of the research instrument appears in Appendix D). These mid-size municipalities were selected based upon the criterion of municipalities falling in the population range of 50,000 to 500,000 residents (Statistics Canada 2001). This is explained in further detail in the research study participants section.

Phase 2 (2005)

In 2005, additional funding was received to expand the base of the research and extend the survey distribution to an additional 11 municipalities across the country between May and August, 2005 (Appendix A).

Phase 3 (Québec 2005)

Key funding was obtained which allowed the researcher to translate into French all research documents (invitation and background letters and web survey) in order to distribute the survey to 8 municipalities in the Province of Québec

between May and August, 2005, thereby providing nation-wide coverage for this study (see Appendix A). A total of 72 municipalities were surveyed over a two year period in this study.

3.4 The Research Instrument

The survey was administered through a web-based survey program called Zoomerang™. Zoomerang™ is a web-based market research service that allows for the design, delivery, and management of web-based surveys. The software allowed for the design and formatting of questions in an easily understood response format that allowed me to cut and paste the link to the survey into introductory emails (research letter) and store responses on its corporate server, thereby guaranteeing respondent anonymity.

Survey Design

The survey instrument was designed to ask respondents about accessibility planning for persons with disabilities in mid-size Canadian municipalities. The questions were designed to gather information from respondents about their municipality's efforts towards accessibility planning, what they felt was notable about what they are doing, and respondents' ideas about other examples of excellence and innovation in accessibility planning for persons with disabilities.

As presented in Appendix D, the survey is divided into six parts – General Accessibility Planning, Involvement of Persons with Disabilities, Innovation in

Accessibility Planning, Factors Affecting Efforts to Improve Accessibility, Concluding Questions and Contact Information. The survey was initially written in English and translated into French for distribution in the Province of Québec.

Survey Questions

The survey combined both closed (structured) and open-ended questions. Closed (structured) questions are defined by Palys (2003, p.175) as “those questions that allow the respondent only a small range of responses (e.g., either filling in a blank or checking off a point on a rating scale.” This question-answer process assumes that the researcher has knowledge about the key aspects of an issue and allows the researcher to develop questions that have standard meanings for all respondents and to determine the ways in which the questions can be answered (Foddy, 1993).

Closed (structured) questions collected information in five areas of the survey. The first area collected data pertinent to the respondent’s understanding and awareness of accessibility planning in his/her own municipality – asking if a specific area(s)/department(s) notable for efforts, were considered innovative practices, and about other factors affecting efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. These questions were forced choice options requiring the respondent to select “yes”, “no” or “don’t know” or in one question, a choice between “yes” or “no.”

Respondents' opinions were then sought on the accessibility planning practices of other municipalities. A number of questions were posed in this area and included asking about specific area(s) or departments notable for efforts, the identification of one municipality most notable for overall efforts, exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in the accessibility planning process, and innovative approaches to improving accessibility. These questions required respondents to select from a list of mid-size cities ("check all" or "check one") or "don't know" or "other municipality not listed" (with the exception of one question) asking the respondents' to specify the municipality.

The middle section of the survey focused on gauging a respondent's understanding or knowledge about the involvement of persons with disabilities in removing barriers to accessibility in their municipality. Respondents were asked to select from seven statements and "check all that apply" and further describe any other involvement. This question was based upon a review of Accessibility Plans in the Province of Ontario to determine the potential involvement or roles of persons with disabilities.

The next closed (structured) question in the survey involved asking respondents to rate factors affecting efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their communities. This particular question was based on the Vaughan Switzer (2001) research in the U.S.A. and adapted to the Canadian

context (see Table 3). The specific question listed 9 factors and asked respondents to rate each factor according to importance (1 “most important”, 2 “somewhat important”, 3 “least important”).

Table 3 Accessibility Factors in Canadian MSCs

| Factors to Improve Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities in Canadian MSCs |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Participation and input from persons with disabilities |
| 2. Interaction or interest from elected officials |
| 3. Financial resources dedicated to improving accessibility |
| 4. Staff resources |
| 5. Staff awareness of accessibility or human rights legislation |
| 6. Training for municipal staff |
| 7. Knowledge about number of persons with disabilities in the community |
| 8. Knowledge of services needed by persons with disabilities |
| 9. Co-ordination and information sharing with other municipalities |

Source: Adapted from Vaughn Switzer (2001, p 657-660)Researcher (2006)

The closed (structured) questions sought the respondent’s opinion regarding what would be helpful in accessibility planning selecting from six listed statements or specifying “other” asking respondents to specify what would be helpful to them.

The survey also asked open-ended questions regarding innovative and leading edge practices. In contrast to closed (structured) questions, open-ended questions “are non-directive” and allow respondents to answer questions in their own words rather than selecting from a set of pre-determined responses (Foddy, 1993). These types of questions are useful to gauge the opinions of respondents

and allow respondents to answer questions in their own words and provide any additional information they may wish to contribute.

Finally, survey respondents were also provided with the opportunity to be re-contacted for further follow-up, should this be necessary. The survey also asked respondents to indicate and provide their email address if they wished to receive an email summary of the survey results. All respondents who completed the web survey were sent a feedback/thank you letter and, upon request, an email summary of the completed study results was made available to them.

Research Study Participants / Sample

Municipalities

Statistics Canada census data (2001) were used to select the core sample of mid-size municipalities (population 50,000 – 500,000) for this survey (all research phases). A complete list of all Canadian MSCs appears in Appendix A. In the Province of Québec, there were a number of amalgamations / consolidations of municipal boundaries in 2001 / 2002 that resulted in the inclusion of two cities in the sample not commonly found within the defined population ranges of the study⁴. It is important to note, however, that although municipal amalgamations / consolidations occurred in Québec, in all cases, the respondents contacted to participate in the survey represent the consolidated municipalities.

⁴ Trois-Rivieres, Lévis, QC

Survey Respondents

The survey was addressed to the staff person within each municipality most knowledgeable in the area of accessibility planning for persons with disabilities. Those respondents were identified and contacted through a number of channels. First, I drew on my work experience in the field. This included established personal networks of professional contacts developed by the researcher in municipalities across the country. Additional information was provided to me by a consultant, a publisher of a disability magazine - Accessible Niagara, and the national non-profit organization, The Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability. In the Province of Ontario, most study participants (aside from those known by me) were located by obtaining the name and email address of the staff person identified as the main contact in municipal Accessibility Plans.

Accessibility Plans are produced annually by municipalities over 10,000 under provincial legislation Bill 125, Ontarians with Disabilities Act (often posted on municipal web sites).

Using municipal web sites to locate respondents proved also highly successful. Starting with the municipal website of each city to be included in the survey, I contacted the web master for information on appropriate contact person, using the search and feedback functions of the web site (feedback@city...) or directly found the staff name or department address responsible for disability/accessibility issues.

Publications proved to be another very helpful tool to locate respondents. In the Province of British Columbia, SPARC BC, the Social Planning and Research Council (a non-partisan independent organization) produced a booklet – Access Links: Community Accessibility Contacts identifying staff contacts responsible for disability/accessibility in municipalities in that province (SPARC BC 2003). In the Province of Québec, I hired two research assistants fluent in the French language and knowledgeable about the subject of study to locate the appropriate staff contact (name, email and phone number) in each of the 13 mid-size municipalities in Québec.

Identification of Individual Survey Respondents

Locating those individual respondents best able and willing to answer the survey often proved challenging because respondents were often not located within the Planning, Building or Social Planning departments which one would expect would be responsible for accessibility planning for persons with disabilities. Table 4 summarizes from email and telephone contact the various municipal departments and position titles where an individual staff member was identified to answer the survey.

Table 4 Municipal Departments and Position Titles

| |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Planning Department Planner Manager of Development Application & Committee Teams Community Facilitator Planning Analyst – Community Service Planning Associate Manager of Planning, Development and Stewardship Community Planner Community Planning Manager Senior Planner Manager of Social Development Director of Administration and Corporate Planning</p> <p>Corporate Services Department Committee Clerk Assistant Clerk Accessibility Coordinator Accessibility Program Coordinator Access and Equity Coordinator Municipal Clerk City Architect Manager of Municipal Properties Health and Wellness Coordinator</p> <p>Parks and Recreation Department Supervisor of Special Services Operations Recreation Programmer Coordinator of Community Recreation Programs Programmer for Persons with Disabilities Coordinator of Community Recreation / Special Needs / Arenas Special Services Coordinator Community Service Coordinator</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Source: Survey Data

A second factor also contributed to the challenge of identifying the appropriate individual survey respondents. Often the locus of responsibility for accessibility planning lay with individual staff members across municipal departments as illustrated in the following quote:

“I am suggesting two persons that may be able to assist with your survey request, or may be able to redirect your inquiry/survey to the most appropriate person. Potential physical barriers or access issues in development/building proposals are addressed through the City’s Design Review Panel ...”Barriers related to ensuring full participation by persons with disabilities in parks and recreation programs are addressed through the Community Development Section of the City’s Parks, Recreation and Culture Department.”

Additionally, although the introduction letter indicated the study sought only the input and opinions of individual staff members, a number of respondents felt the need to collaborate with laypersons, persons with disabilities and others on their respective Municipal Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees in order to complete the survey.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Primary Data

The web-based survey was used to collect the primary data for this research study over the period of time from May to August, 2004 (Phase 1) and from May to August, 2005 (Phase 2 and Phase 3 Québec).

Secondary Data

A review of collected municipal Accessibility Plans (available in Ontario), reports, Council minutes, and other government documents describing accessibility planning was undertaken in order to explore the nature of accessibility planning and describe innovative practices. Additionally, supplemental data such as (prevalence and nature of disability in the Canadian population) were obtained from the Participation and Activity Limitation Study (PALS) (2001) statistical database available through Statistics Canada. The process of primary data collection took both a direct, and more than often, a circuitous – indirect route.

Direct Methods of Data Collection

Two direct methods of data collection were undertaken in this study. In the Province of Ontario, the email address of the municipal staff contact responsible for the Accessibility Plan was identified in the Plan (hard copy or posted on the city web site) and the web survey was sent directly to this person. Municipal staff contacts outside of the Province of Ontario were obtained from the specific

municipal web site (staff or department responsible for disability/accessibility issues or disability/accessibility issues advisory committee staff contact). The web survey was then sent directly to this person. This method of data collection was the most efficient in terms of turn-around time from the time the appropriate staff contact was identified, and responses were returned to me.

Indirect Methods of Data Collection

When direct methods of data collection were not possible, I sought out data in other ways. “Broadcast” emails from the researcher were sent to the Municipal Council/Mayor’s Office or to the webmaster or Feedback@city... then forwarded to the municipal staff person responsible for disability/accessibility areas.

Provincial contacts of the researcher directed the email request to either a municipal staff contact in province (if known) or if unknown to another Provincial non-profit (e.g. Alberta Parks and Recreation Association or provincial staff contact in the Canadian Paraplegic Association). In some circumstances – when an email address was not readily available or no responses were received to the various requests for an email address - a phone call was made to the municipality making a general inquiry to locate the applicable staff person.

The various methods of indirect data collection were often carried out simultaneously in a “multi-pronged” approach to find the most appropriate municipal staff contact for survey completion. In terms of time and efficiency, this was time consuming; however, this indirect process did eventually yield the most

appropriate respondent for the survey completion, and was likely responsible for the high response rate for the survey.

The Process of Data Collection

The process of data collection followed the following four steps:

- Development of Web Survey
- Pilot Test of Web Survey
- Identification of appropriate municipal staff to send an information letter with an Internet link to the self-administered web survey. This was done utilizing the various direct and indirect methods of data collection discussed in previous section.
- Email survey to staff person in the mid-size municipalities

Two areas in the process of data collection are important to highlight. These are the timing of web survey distribution and the accessibility of the survey to all potential respondents.

In order to distribute the survey in as time efficient manner as possible to the municipalities, once email addresses were located; the survey was distributed in “waves” or rounds. The first wave of surveys was sent to 32 municipalities and while those surveys were out in the field being completed, I continued to collect email addresses of other municipalities in the study. The second wave was sent to an additional seven municipalities. This allowed me to accurately distribute the

surveys into the field over a period of days without having to be held up attempting to obtain all email addresses at one time. This was important because some email addresses of appropriate municipal staff required much more research and time to locate.

In order to ensure accessibility to all survey respondents, including those potential respondents with disabilities, the research letter indicated that “alternate formats” of the survey were available if required. This request was filled twice. One respondent self-disclosed that he is a person who is blind and could not access the web survey on the Internet, however, he could work from a Word document. A second respondent preferred to complete the survey in a Word document and email the completed document back to me. In both instances, I then transcribed the data into the live web survey.

Response Rate

The response to this nation-wide web survey was high. Of the 72 surveys distributed across Canada during 2004 and 2005, a total of 52 municipalities completed the survey representing a response rate of 72% (see Table 5). Appendix A identifies the cities included in the survey during the three phases of the research.

Table 5 Overall Response Rate

| N=72 | 2004 | 2005 | Quebec | Overall |
|----------------------|------|------|--------|---------|
| Sent | 53 | 11 | 8 | 72 |
| Responses | 41 | 7 | 4 | 52 |
| Response Rate | 77% | 64% | 50% | 72% |
| Source: Survey Data | | | | |

3.6 Analysis Procedures

The study data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively in order to present a complete summary of findings – i.e. to examine and summarize both what municipalities are doing to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and how accessibility planning is evolving in these communities.

Quantitative Analysis

Summaries and response rates were calculated for each of the structured questions in the survey. The Zoomerang™ software electronically calculated this data with the results made available to the researcher in a summary spreadsheet format for analysis. Responses to each of the structured questions in the spreadsheet were then analyzed to produce descriptive statistics and summarize the overall findings.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative methods were used in this study to allow for a greater and more in-depth understanding of the accessibility planning practices of staff in mid-size Canadian municipalities. The lead method of qualitative analysis involved reviewing the survey transcripts for general patterns and identifying emerging

themes. As a supplementary process to this, additional qualitative data was obtained by reviewing emails from municipalities for categories of information, patterns and themes.

3.7 Limitations

This study had a number of potential limitations. Most of the limitations involved the use of the web-based survey as the choice of research instrument and were discussed earlier in this section. However, these limitations are worth repeating specific to this particular study.

Survey respondents (municipal staff) were limited to those persons with access to a computer or online network in order to complete survey, also, respondents using this type of web-based survey occasionally used very casual and “point-form” language. That kind of abbreviated bullet-form notation was missing some of the richness and subtlety of full text, which presented some difficulty in coding, interpreting and then reporting the responses to open-ended questions.

As noted by Gray and Guppy, 2003 and Palys, 2003, web surveys can be jeopardized because of response rate reliability (noted earlier) and validity of some results. The validity of this study may have been partially compromised because I did not know exactly who responded to the survey; the survey may have been screened before reaching the intended respondent – I discovered this did happen in one instance.

Also, issues of respondent anonymity arose. I knew the respondents' email addresses, and therefore the web-based survey was not truly anonymous. Attempts were made in the invitation and background letters, however, to reassure respondents that the information they provided would remain confidential; all of the data would be summarized and the Zoomerang™ web site would not collect information to identify them, such as machine identifiers.

Additionally, my long-term involvement and reputation in the field of accessibility planning may have influenced the results and created a “Kitchener bias”, in the municipal ratings section. Finally, the results of this research relied upon and were limited to only the availability, opinions and input of municipal staff willing to participate in the study. The experiences of the broader population of citizens with disabilities were not gauged in this study.

This chapter described the research design and methods that were used in this study. The next chapter will provide a detailed account of the research findings according to the five main areas of the web-based survey.

Chapter 4 Research Findings

This chapter presents the overall survey results. The data were collected and analyzed according to the five main areas within the web survey: General Accessibility Planning, Involvement of Persons with Disabilities, Innovation in Accessibility Planning, Factors Affecting Efforts to Improve Accessibility Planning and Concluding Questions.

4.1 Introduction

Findings are presented in this chapter according to 6 areas:

- General Accessibility Planning
- Key Stakeholders Involved in Accessibility Planning
- Conditions Affecting Accessibility Planning
- Municipal Ratings of Accessibility Planning
- “In Your Opinion” - Feedback of Municipal Staff
- Summary of Key Findings

The first three topic areas incorporate data from various questions from the web survey. Both the Municipal Ratings and “In Your Opinion” sections address those specific individual survey questions, and finally a summary of key findings will be presented at the end of this chapter.

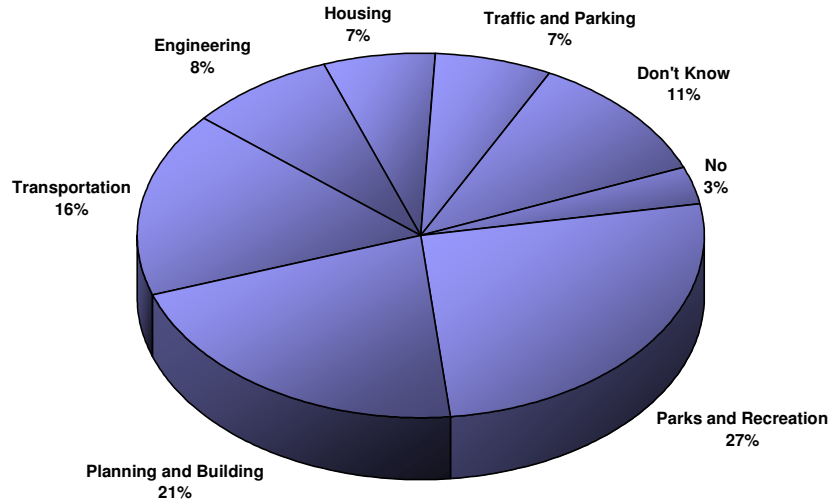
4.2 General Accessibility Planning

Specific Area or Areas Notable for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities

Most respondents reported an area or areas within their municipal structure notable for efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and they were able to specifically identify this area(s). In fact, only seven respondents (12%) to this question indicated they didn't know and two respondents (3%) indicated no – there was no specific area or areas notable for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

As indicated in Figure 3, it appears that most respondents (50 out of 59 responses to this question) or 85% believe they have a specific area / department or areas / departments within their municipal setting notable for efforts to improve accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Figure 3 Specific Areas/Departments Notable for Efforts to Improve Accessibility



Source: Survey Data

Respondents often indicated more than one area / department that was notable for efforts to improve accessibility. In fact, respondents were quite detailed in listing achievements within areas / departments. When asked to briefly describe the area / department or areas / departments and what is notable, the following findings are represented (as shown in Table 6): Parks and Recreation, Planning and Building, Transportation, Engineering and Public Works, Housing and Traffic and Parking.

Table 6 Identified Areas / Departments

| Area | Number of Comments |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Parks and Recreation | 16 |
| Planning and Building | 13 |
| Transportation | 10 |
| Engineering and Public Works | 5 |
| Housing | 4 |
| Traffic and Parking | 4 |
| N=52 | |

Source: Survey Data

The following section describes each of the areas and notable examples provided by respondents.

Parks & Recreation

The areas of Parks and Recreation received the greatest number of comments. Municipalities considered accessibility to parks for persons with disabilities in two areas: Playgrounds/Outdoor Spaces and Park or Trail Master Plans.

Playgrounds/Outdoors Spaces

Several municipalities noted retrofitting programs to install accessible play structures in parks and the concept of “playability” or inclusive playgrounds accessible to all children “All Our Kids” Play Park but designed with accessibility in mind. One municipality described working with the local home and school associations to upgrade playground facilities, ensuring barrier free accessibility through the use of accessible surfacing and wheelchair accessible fountains. Accessibility audits of city playgrounds and parks were also conducted in some municipalities to determine their level of accessibility.

Park or Trail Master Plans

A smaller number of municipalities suggested plans to make their trail systems wheelchair accessible, while one municipality considered accessibility standards for persons with disabilities within in their Park or Trail Master plans. Two municipalities described in detail how their trail system was accessible – showing

areas with steep grades and designing all trails to be accessible to scooter users and surfacing and trail gradients to meet the needs of persons with mobility disabilities. Not limited to providing access to persons using wheelchairs, this municipality is revising their trail map to include icons indicating the location of wheelchair accessible washrooms as well as locations where scooter users can plug into a power supply to recharge batteries if needed.

Recreation

This is an area significant of note. With respect to recreation services, 16 municipalities commented that their municipality was notable with respect to efforts to improve accessibility to persons with disabilities within this area or department. This was most commonly done through municipal recreation program delivery, accommodation of persons with disabilities in municipal recreation programs and dedication of staff resources.

Municipal Recreation Program Delivery

Municipal recreation programs for persons with disabilities were grouped as either “specialized” recreation programs (e.g. adapted aquatics) exclusively designed for persons with disabilities, or “inclusive” recreation opportunities. Recreation opportunities delivered where possible in co-operation with existing community groups (e.g. increasing access to existing community recreation facilities and programs for children with disabilities). Additionally, although not

traditional recreation program delivery, some municipalities recognized community organizations that included persons with disabilities in their recreation programming by providing in kind (staff training or technical assistance) and financial support (grants) to these community organizations.

Accommodation of Persons with Disabilities in Municipal Recreation Programs

Accommodation means putting in place the necessary supports that allow a person with a disability to participate fully in all areas of society. It can sometimes mean using “unequal measures” to create equitable opportunities – for example, providing a designated parking space closer to the entrance to a facility than other parking spaces which allows the person with the disability easier access the facility.

A number of municipalities have established recreation support services that provide trained staff or volunteers to assist the child or adult while participating in the recreation program. One municipality indicated that this type of accommodation gave children with significant disabilities the opportunity to participate in programs that they might not have been able to attend otherwise.

A second example of accommodation cited was that of establishing policies or procedures that permit personal attendants (required by persons with disabilities in order to participate in recreation programs) “no charge” admittance to municipal recreation programs in their support role.

Dedication of Staff Resources

Of all areas of municipal service delivery, Recreation was the only area/department to clearly identify staff resources attached to removing barriers to the participation of persons with disabilities. Staff responsibilities included program assessment and development, education and support to other municipal staff, and the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in municipal recreation activities. A number of municipalities also described recreation facility audits undertaken by staff to ensure that all physical barriers to participation in community recreation activities are removed.

Planning and Building

The areas of Planning and Building primarily addressed accessibility for persons with disabilities through three means: guidelines and standards documents, during site plan review, and “renovation/retrofit” programs.

Guidelines and Standards Documents

Examples of documents used by municipalities included:

- Access Guidelines (Planning) for design within the city
- Facility Accessibility Design Standards for municipally owned facilities
- Design guidelines for “outdoor” accessibility
- Universal Design guidelines
- Provincial Building Code Standards (cited in Alberta and British Columbia)

Site Plan Review

A number of municipalities established formal processes for ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities within site plan review. These included:

- Review of plans of new civic buildings.
- All new developments are assessed in the course of the Design Review process, including a referral to an Advisory Design Panel – one panel member is a representative of a disability organization within the city.
- A representative from the Accessibility/Disability Issue advisory committee sits on the Advisory Design panel which reviews Development Permits and provides recommendations on site design, form and character for all large city projects, as well as private commercial, industrial and multi-family projects
- Comment on all development applications.
- Consulting with the Accessibility/Disability Issue advisory committee during the site plan approval process.

Renovation/Retrofit Programs

Renovation/retrofit programs were identified as a means of strategically addressing the removal of physical barriers to persons with disabilities to existing municipal facilities – such as libraries, community centres, arenas, etc. with an annual allocation of capital funds by municipal councils.

Transportation

Public transportation or transit services for persons with disabilities covered both conventional and parallel transit services. Conventional transit included the conversion and integration of “low floor” buses into the municipal transit system in a number of municipalities, and to a lesser degree, the issuance of accessible taxi licenses. Parallel transit services (adapted transport, Para or Mobility Transit) were also referred to in many municipalities as the systems dedicated to the transportation of persons with disabilities.

One municipality completed a review of public transit fares and has put in place Para Transit Fare Parity for riders of parallel transit. Another municipality has implemented annual funding for bus stop upgrades and an Accessible Transportation Action Committee reviews the transportation system to ensure accessibility services are at a high level.

Engineering and Public Works

Engineering and Public works directed efforts to improve accessibility to persons with disabilities through capital work plans to replace or install “curb cuts” or drop curbs at intersections or crosswalks in both “older areas’ and new areas of development. Additionally, some municipalities also discussed the efforts of staff to develop a priority list of intersections for the installation of “audible traffic signals.” Of particular interest was one municipality that described the installation of both “audible” and “vibrating” pedestrian signals at key intersections.

A smaller number of municipalities commented upon the development of standards to ensure accessibility of municipal sidewalks and standards for the installation of audible pedestrian signals indicating ...” other areas of note: our standards for audible pedestrian signals are developed by our committee on disability issues.” In the Province of Quebec one municipality described a possible agreement with the local waste collection agency to pick up garbage/waste from the door steps of persons with disabilities.

As Canada is a country with a winter climate for at least several months, it was heartening to see the establishment in one Ontario municipality of a “Windrow and Sidewalk” snow-clearance program for persons with disabilities and seniors.

Housing

Fewer municipalities distinguished Housing as an area in their municipality notable for improving accessibility to persons with disabilities than the areas of planning and building or parks and recreation. However, when asked, a number of municipalities cited the adoption of “adaptable design” guidelines for residential housing development, “accessible” and “adaptable” housing policies and in one instance, a subcommittee of the Accessibility/Disability Issue advisory committee responsible to investigate problem areas of housing and homelessness.

Both adaptable design and accessible and adaptable housing policies appeared to address the need to ensure the availability of housing for an aging population.

In one municipality, developers of seniors housing are requested to follow the more rigorous of “ three levels of adaptability” in the guidelines, and another municipality allowed homeowner to have a second “suite” in a single family home if the suite was made accessible.

Traffic and Parking

Survey respondents only rarely described examples of efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in the area of traffic and parking. Comments in this area included increased enforcement of designated parking spots for persons with disabilities, provision of designated parking spaces in all new developments within the municipal zoning by-law and increasing the number of designated parking spaces in a downtown core.

4.3 Key Stakeholders Involved in Accessibility Planning

Several key stakeholders were identified in the research as important to successful accessibility planning in mid-size municipalities. These stakeholders include:

- Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees
- Municipal Staff
- Elected Officials
- Volunteers
- General Public

Outside these categories of key stakeholders, the overall involvement of persons with disabilities in policy development and program design and delivery emerges as clearly essential to effective accessibility planning and both qualitative and quantitative findings will be reported in the latter part of this section.

Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees

The presence of Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees is identified by many respondents in qualitative comments in the web survey as ensuring that the corporate decision making process on barrier removal is inclusive of persons with disabilities through the committee.

Involvement of Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees

Respondents indicated a two-way relationship between municipal Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees and staff to address barriers to persons with disabilities. Acting upon recommendations of these committees – “Our Council and our CAO have strongly endorsed all advice and recommendations received from our AAC...” (Source: Survey Data)

The various roles of Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees described include:

- Working with staff to remove barriers to persons with disabilities in various areas of municipal responsibility.

- Providing advice and recommendations to staff and Council that will encourage policies to achieve barrier free living.
- Advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities.
- Fulfilling legislative requirements in Ontario (ODA, 2001).
- Consultation in the site plan approval process.
- Recommending capital improvements to city owned facilities – the committee is given a budget and they decide where money is spent.
- Conducting accessibility audits on municipal and other facilities.
- Establishing annual awards to recognize accessibility in the community.
- Promotion of accessibility for all citizens by the members of the committee.

Municipal Staff

Involvement of Staff

When commenting upon the involvement of staff in municipal accessibility planning, respondents described both departmental staff participation and the responsibility of individual staff members. One rapidly growing municipality in Western Canada commented upon its Municipal Integration Strategy Team and described staff discussions underway to connect with the broader community to achieve an accessible community for persons with disabilities. Individual staff members in some municipalities, such as the Chief Building Official or Planning Director, often had regular communication or a liaison and reporting relationship with members of the local Accessibility/Disability Issue advisory committee.

The level of staff project involvement included participation on committees, working directly with members of the Accessibility/Disability Issue advisory Committee or providing departmental leadership to accessibility planning.

Elected Officials

Involvement of Elected Officials

The involvement of elected officials in order to advance the removal of barriers to persons with disabilities in mid-size municipalities was cited in a smaller number of qualitative comments. Some municipalities have an established “Mayor’s Task Force” or other similar committee on accessibility reporting directly to Council with the participation of elected officials. One municipality identified the hesitant involvement of elected officials as “only acting proactively when they know the public is behind them or willing to pay the cost (especially in the case of retrofitting).”

Volunteers

A small number of respondents commented upon the value and importance of volunteers as key stakeholders in successful accessibility planning in their municipalities. Two quotes in particular stood out – “they have a great volunteer base...committed to accessibility planning” and “The city has had a continuous

group of dedicated volunteers who are consistently working with the municipality to improve access.”

General Public

Respondents indicated that the general public also had a role in creating awareness of accessibility issues in a variety of comments returned in the web survey. These included comments such as: “the willingness on behalf of all residents to be aware of the different barriers a person might face in their daily living activities” to stronger comments asserting that “general public awareness and interest in disability issues must exist before anything can happen.”

Involvement of Persons with Disabilities in the Process of Accessibility Planning

This research indicates that municipalities involve persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning in a variety of ways. Accessibility/Disability Issue advisory committees are one way municipalities involve persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning. Respondents were asked to indicate from a pre-determined list of statements *all of the ways* their municipality involves persons with disabilities in accessibility planning. Table 7 illustrates the percentage of responses to each of these statements.

Table 7 Involvement of Persons with Disabilities in Accessibility Planning

| N=56 | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Persons with Disabilities: | Total | 2004 | 2005 | Quebec | Response Ratio |
| Report accessibility problem areas | 45 | 37 | 5 | 3 | 80% |
| Review site plans and drawings | 42 | 34 | 6 | 2 | 75% |
| Participate in policy development | 39 | 33 | 4 | 2 | 70% |
| Participate in accessibility audits | 40 | 33 | 5 | 2 | 71% |
| Provide training to staff | 28 | 22 | 5 | 1 | 50% |
| Try out new accessibility products | 17 | 15 | 1 | 1 | 30% |
| Other involvement | 15 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 27% |
| None of the above | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2% |

Source: Survey Data

The data presented in Table 7 show that the involvement of persons with disabilities occurs at many levels in the municipality, from reporting of “problem areas” (complaint driven) to participation in site plan and drawing review, policy development affecting persons with disabilities, and accessibility audits.

Municipal staff reported significantly less involvement of persons with disabilities in training of staff or trying out new accessibility products.

The largest number of respondents (80%) to this question indicated that persons with disabilities report accessibility problem areas. It would appear from this figure that although municipalities may involve persons with disabilities in a number of ways, the predominant involvement reported by respondents is limited to reporting complaints as one respondent noted: “We are proactive in addressing complaints from handicapped persons regarding private sites.”

This was followed by significant responses (recording over a 70% response ratio) to three statements. Persons with disabilities review site plans and drawings (75% of respondents), persons with disabilities participate in policy development (70%) and persons with disabilities participate in accessibility audits (71%). The questionnaire statement “persons with disabilities review site plans and drawings” may have recorded a higher response rate because the majority of the cities in the survey sample are from the Province of Ontario. In Ontario, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) gives the Accessibility Advisory Committees (AACs) legislated under this Act the authority to review site plans. The legislation also requires Council to seek the advice from the Committees with respect to the accessibility to persons with disabilities to buildings the municipality owns, builds, leases or significantly renovates.

Although reported slightly less, the participation of persons with disabilities in policy development was rated quite high and in some municipalities included direct participation in policy development and review. One municipality provided the example of the involvement of persons with disabilities in the creation of an accessibility checklist for private developers. Another high response was reported regarding the participation of persons with disabilities in accessibility audits. Half of the respondents (50%) to this question indicated that persons with disabilities provide training to staff in their municipality.

Finally, two statements elicited approximately one-third of responses. Close to one-third (30%) of responses were made to the statement “persons with

disabilities try out new accessibility products”; other involvement of persons with disabilities in accessibility planning was described by 27% of respondents. Three responses to this statement identify a strong leadership and public education role for persons with disabilities in municipal accessibility planning as spokespersons in public education events, leading workshop and planning sessions along with staff and participating in “public awareness (Access Awareness) displays and surveys.” (Source: Survey Data) Finally, the direct participation of persons with disabilities was noted on other municipal committees where their input could be given. One municipality engaged the personal expertise of a person with a disability solely for their input into the design of municipal/other facilities on the municipality’s Advisory Design Panel.

Only two responses indicated that persons with disabilities were not involved in any of the listed areas. Clearly the higher percentages of respondents identifying the various ways their municipality involves persons with disabilities in accessibility planning indicates that the participation of persons with disabilities was fundamental to successful accessibility planning initiatives in municipalities.

4.4 Conditions Affecting Accessibility Planning

Factors Affecting Efforts to Improve Accessibility

Survey respondents were asked to give their opinion by ranking in importance (1 “most important”, 2 “somewhat important”, 3 “least important”) a series of nine

statements regarding the factors they believe affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their community.

Out of the 9 factors listed, Table 8 shows the overall breakdown of responses presented in order of the percentage who indicate that a factor was most important they believe to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their community.

Table 8 Factors Affecting Efforts to Improve Accessibility in Canadian Mid-size Municipalities

| | Total | Most Important | | Somewhat Important | | Least Important | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Participation and input from persons with disabilities | 52 | 48 | 92% | 4 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Financial resources dedicated to improving accessibility | 53 | 45 | 85% | 7 | 13% | 1 | 2% |
| Interaction or interest from elected officials | 52 | 43 | 83% | 9 | 17% | 0 | 0% |
| Staff resources | 55 | 42 | 76% | 12 | 22% | 1 | 2% |
| Knowledge of services needed by persons with disabilities | 52 | 38 | 73% | 11 | 21% | 3 | 6% |
| Training for municipal staff | 51 | 30 | 59% | 21 | 41% | 0 | 0% |
| Staff awareness of accessibility or human rights legislation | 52 | 30 | 59% | 22 | 42% | 0 | 0% |
| Coordination and information sharing with other municipalities | 52 | 21 | 40% | 26 | 50% | 5 | 10% |
| Knowledge about # of persons with disabilities in the community | 51 | 13 | 25% | 27 | 53% | 11 | 22% |
| Source: Survey Data | | | | | | | |

These results indicate that participation and input from persons with disabilities is the most important factor (92%), with interaction or interest from elected officials and financial resources dedicated to improving accessibility ranked highly as well with over three-quarters of most important responses to these factors (83-85%). Knowledge of services needed by persons with disabilities, and staff resources

fell closely together within the 70% range (73-76%) for those who ranked them as most important.

Staff awareness of accessibility or human rights legislation and training for municipal staff received significantly lower responses, with 59% of respondents ranking both as the most important factor they believe to affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their community. Looking at the factors rated as most important above 80% of responses, it is interesting to note that respondents appear to value highly both human (participation and input of persons with disabilities, interaction and interest of elected officials and staff) and financial resources.

Although it is clear from Table 8 what the most important factors are for respondents in general, it is worthwhile to look further at the ratings of the statements for frequencies and patterns of responses, and links between answers to various questions. Clearly, respondents overwhelmingly believe that participation and input from persons with disabilities is very important as a significant difference exists between those respondents ranking this factor as most important (92%) and the small percentage of respondents (8%) who cited this factor as somewhat important. No respondents indicated that participation from persons with disabilities was the least important factor. This is an important finding from this study.

The next two factors – interaction or interest from elected officials and financial resources dedicated to improving accessibility - lay relatively close together in terms of those who indicated these were most important factors (83 and 85% respectively). However, when one looks further at those respondents who rated these factors as somewhat important a greater percentage of respondents, almost one quarter (17%) believe that the interaction or interest of elected officials rates just slightly higher than financial resources dedicated to improving accessibility (13%).

The factors of staff resources (76%) and knowledge of services needed by persons with disabilities (73%) received virtually the same number of “most important” responses - approximately three-quarters of responses by survey respondents to this statement. A large gap overall exists for each of these factors between the respondents who ranked these factors as most important as compared with those who ranked them as somewhat important. However, when factoring in the respondents who rated each of these statements as somewhat important, a slightly greater percentage rated staff resources higher (22%) than knowledge of services needed by persons with disabilities (21%) giving stronger weight to the overall importance given by respondents to the factor of staff resources. Additionally, a greater number of respondents felt that it was less important to know services needed by persons with disabilities (6%) than to have staff resources (2%).

The last two factors that received the least number of “most important” responses were training for municipal staff and staff awareness of accessibility or human rights legislation (both 59%). Responses to training for municipal staff revealed close to a 60/40 split with almost sixty percent of respondents indicating this was a most important factor, while 41% of respondents saw this factor as somewhat important. No respondents saw this factor as least important. Responses to staff awareness of accessibility or human rights legislation was similar with 59% of respondents indicating this was a most important factor and 42% of respondents saw this factor as somewhat important.

Only two factors in this survey question ranked higher by respondents as “somewhat important” than a most important factor. A larger percentage of respondents indicated that co-ordination and information sharing with other municipalities, and knowledge about the number of persons with disabilities living in the community (50-53%) only ranked as somewhat important in affecting efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their community.

Other Factors Affecting Efforts to improve Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

Survey respondents were then asked if there were *other factors* that they affected efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their community. There were 45 responses to this question (Table 9). Of this total, 56% of respondents indicated yes and 44% of respondents indicated no to this question.

Table 9 Other Factors Affecting Efforts to Improve Accessibility

| N=45 | Total | 2004 | 2005 | Quebec 2005 | Response Ratio |
|--------------|-------|------|------|-------------|----------------|
| Yes | 25 | 21 | 4 | 0 | 56% |
| No | 20 | 17 | 1 | 2 | 44% |
| Total | 45 | 38 | 5 | 2 | 100% |

Source: Survey Data

Respondents provided a total of 37 qualitative comments describing the other factors they believe that affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. For purposes of reporting, those comments reported most often by respondents have been grouped into the following factors: categories of “Buy-In, Political Will and Commitment”, Support from the Province and Legislation.

“Buy In, Political Will & Commitment”

These specific terms appeared in eight descriptions of other factors respondents believed affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. When addressing the role of elected officials the term “political will” was used often.

Clearly respondents felt that not only interaction and interest from elected officials was very important (as noted earlier) but, the “political will” of politicians was key to improving accessibility efforts for persons with disabilities as one respondent stated: “With the participation of the disability community and the political will of elected officials, the other factors will be more easily achieved.” Or, it was seen as hindering efforts as in the following quote: “Inadequate infrastructure, in particular sidewalks; priority of automobiles over pedestrians in design of intersection and all road design; lack of political will to spend money on these things.”

Respondents also commented upon the “buy in” (or the lack of “buy in”) and the commitment of staff as illustrated in the quotes from respondents below as a factor deemed important to improve accessibility in their communities.

“*Buy in* of importance from all senior management and councils and residents within municipalities.”

“*Buy in* of municipal planning and engineering staff (currently lacking) as well as commitment of Council.”

“*Commitment* of Department Heads to Committee suggestions.”

Clearly, respondents felt that the type of involvement of both elected officials and municipal staff was another important factor to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Support from Province

Respondents cited support from the province as including provision of financial support (“...resources (money) to address accessibility issues”) and the need for training, resources and research support from the Province. One respondent from British Columbia noted another factor affecting efforts to improve accessibility was the “political will and resources (money) to address accessibility issues. The Province of BC is no longer providing any support for accessibility awareness.”

Legislation

Respondents described the need for “better” legislation with standards and guidelines for accessibility to be developed. These comments were often categorized along with the need for leadership and accountability models for municipalities in this area.

4.5 Municipal Ratings of Accessibility Planning

In order to gauge the opinions of respondents on accessibility planning in mid-size Canadian municipalities, and to report innovative practices, respondents were asked four questions requiring them to select municipalities from a prepared list or to identify other municipalities in a space provided. Three of the

questions asked respondents to “check all that apply” from a list of municipalities available and gave them the option to indicate “another municipality not listed.” One question restricted respondents to selecting only one municipality from a drop down menu. All questions gave respondents the option to select “don’t know” if they were unable to answer the question.

Results reported in percentages above a 5% response rate will be presented for each question. Results indicating “don’t know” and “other municipality not listed” will be omitted in order to present only those mid-size municipalities selected. A complete table of all results that received at least one response for this section of the survey is available in Appendix B. One caveat bears repeating before proceeding with the results of the municipal ratings. My longstanding personal and professional development in this field may in fact have influenced these research results. Respondents in Ontario, in particular South-western and Central Ontario, may have been more likely to respond to my study and may have also biased their replies citing Kitchener, Ontario in the top selections in each of the four municipal rating questions as a mid-size municipality notable for accessibility planning efforts.

Other Municipalities Notable for Their efforts in a Specific Area or Areas

The first question asked respondents for their opinion on municipalities that are notable for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with a disability in a specific area/department or areas/departments. Respondents were not limited in the number of municipalities they could select and were given the option to indicate “don’t know” if they were unable to answer this question. This question received the highest response rate of all municipal rating questions in the survey.

Table 10 shows the most cited municipality was Guelph, Ontario (11%), followed by Peterborough, Ontario, Brampton, Ontario and Kitchener, Ontario recording the same percentage of responses (7%). London, Ontario (6%) and the District of North Vancouver, British Columbia (5%) recorded just slightly over five per cent of respondents to this question. Respondents referred to a number of “other municipalities not listed” in the sample of municipalities provided. Mississauga, Ontario, The City of North Vancouver, British Columbia, Ottawa, Ontario and Toronto, Ontario, all large Canadian municipalities were each noted more than once in response to this question. One small municipality, the Town of Sidney, British Columbia, population 10,929 (Census 2001) appeared once in the midst of these large municipalities and was noted also. A complete list of these “other municipalities not listed” and responses appears in Appendix B.

Table 10 Other Municipalities Notable for Efforts to Improve Accessibility

| Municipality | Responses |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Guelph, ON | 11% |
| Peterborough, ON | 7% |
| Brampton, ON | 7% |
| Kitchener, ON | 7% |
| London, ON | 6% |
| North Vancouver, BC | 5% |

Source: Survey Data

One Municipality Notable for Overall Efforts to Improve Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

Respondents were then asked to consider the complete range of municipal services and select one municipality from the list of municipalities they believed to be most notable for *overall efforts* to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. Respondents were restricted to selecting only one municipality from a drop down menu; however, they could select their own municipality and were given the option to indicate “don’t know” if they were unable to answer this question. Additionally, respondents were not given the choice in this question to select another municipality not listed.

As seen in Table 11, Peterborough, Ontario, and Guelph, Ontario were selected by 15% of respondents to this question. London, Ontario and Kitchener, Ontario followed each with 6% of responses. The cities of Peterborough, Ontario and Guelph, Ontario continue to be recognized by respondents for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in specific

area(s)/department(s) and overall efforts. The cities of London, Ontario and Kitchener, Ontario appeared in the top five selections in these first two municipal rating questions. A complete list of these “responses are provided in Appendix B.

Table 11 One Municipality Notable for Overall Efforts to Improve Accessibility

| Municipality | Responses |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Peterborough, ON | 15% |
| Guelph, ON | 15% |
| London, ON | 6% |
| Kitchener, ON | 6% |

Source: Survey Data

Exceptional Examples of Involving Persons with Disabilities in the process of Accessibility Planning

Involvement of persons with disabilities in accessibility planning was addressed in two questions in the survey. The first question required respondents to select, from a list, the ways in which their municipality involves persons with disabilities in accessibility planning and to describe qualitatively any other involvement.

The second question asked respondents about initiatives or programs by Canadian municipalities that they believed were exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning. Respondents were not limited in the number of municipalities they could select and were given the option to indicate “don’t know” if they were unable to answer this question.

Table 12 shows once again the most cited municipality was Guelph, Ontario selected by 14% of respondents to this question, with Brampton, Ontario reporting eleven percent (11%) of responses. Four municipalities then followed with 7% of responses each – Burlington, Ontario, Kitchener, Ontario, Peterborough, Ontario and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The cities of Kitchener, Ontario and Peterborough, Ontario were selected for a third time in this section, although further down the list of selected municipalities.

Respondents referred to “other municipalities not listed” in the sample of municipalities provided. Mississauga, Ontario and the City of North Vancouver, British Columbia, and both large Canadian cities were each noted again by respondents to this specific survey question. The Region of Peel, Ontario was noted for a second time. A complete list of these “other municipalities not listed” is provided in Appendix B.

Table 12 Exceptional Examples of Involving Persons with Disabilities

| Municipality | Responses |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Guelph, ON | 14% |
| Brampton, ON | 11% |
| Burlington, ON | 7% |
| Kitchener, ON | 7% |
| Peterborough, ON | 7% |
| Sault St. Marie, ON | 7% |
| N= | |

Source: Survey Data

Initiatives or programs that are innovative in improving accessibility for persons with disabilities

The documentation and reporting of initiatives or programs that are innovative in improving accessibility for persons with disabilities was addressed by two questions in this section. The first question provided actual examples of innovation such as “Access-A-Can” (Globe and Mail, 1999) in accessibility planning and respondents were asked whether there were programs or initiatives their municipalities that they considered being innovative such as “Access-A-Can” (Globe and Mail, 1999) in improving accessibility for persons with disabilities. Of the responses to this question shown in Table 13 36% answered No, 34% indicated yes and 30% answered “don’t know” to this question.

Table 13 Innovative Programs or Initiatives

| N=47 | Total | 2004 | 2005 | Quebec Total | Response Ratio |
|-------------------|-------|------|------|--------------|----------------|
| Yes | 16 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 34% |
| No | 17 | 12 | 4 | 1 | 36% |
| Don't Know | 14 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 30% |
| Total | 47 | 37 | 7 | 3 | 100% |

Source: Survey Data

Other Municipalities that are undertaking innovative approaches to improving accessibility in their communities

The second “innovation” and final municipal rating question asked respondents if they are aware of other municipalities that are undertaking innovative approaches to improve accessibility in their communities. Respondents were not limited in the number of municipalities they could select and they were given the option to indicate “don’t know” if they were unable to answer this question.

This question received the lowest response rate in this section with only 22 responses in total. As shown in Table 14 Brampton, Ontario and Kitchener, Ontario– each recorded 10% of responses to this question. The lower response rate could have been due to “respondent fatigue” nearing the end of the survey or perhaps respondents are not well informed about innovative accessibility planning practices in other municipalities. Brampton, Ontario was selected for a third time and Kitchener, Ontario for a fourth time in this section. Respondents referred to “other municipalities not listed” in the sample of municipalities provided. Respondents selected Mississauga, Ontario, and the Region of Peel, Ontario, for the third time while respondents noted Ottawa, Ontario for the second time. A complete list of these “other municipalities not listed” and responses is provided in Appendix B.

Table 14 Other Municipalities Undertaking Innovative Approaches

| Municipality | Responses |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Brampton, ON | 10% |
| Kitchener, ON | 10% |

Source: Survey Data

4.6 “In Your Opinion” Feedback of Municipal Staff

In the last rating question on the web survey, respondents were asked an “opinion” question about what they would find helpful in accessibility planning as the last rating question on the web survey, and to check all statements that apply from a pre-determined list. Table 15 shows the overall breakdown of responses to each statement by respondents.

Table 15 Feedback of Municipal Staff

| Selection | Number of responses | Response ratio (60 respondents) |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Networking | 38 | 63% |
| Tours | 38 | 63% |
| Workshops / conferences | 37 | 62% |
| E-newsletter | 37 | 62% |
| Awards | 20 | 33% |
| Listserv | 12 | 20% |
| Other | 12 | 20% |

Source: Survey Data

These results indicate that the top four statements “networking/group association” (63%), “tours of interesting/innovative examples of accessibility” (63%), “workshops/conferences” (62%) and “e-newsletter on what’s happening in the field of accessibility” (62%) rated close to three-quarters or just over three-quarters of the responses. These were clearly the top selections of respondents as the responses then dropped off significantly to 33% of respondents who selected “awards to acknowledge excellence and innovation” and 20% of respondents who felt that a “Listserv” discussion or in their opinion “other” suggestions were specified.

No one suggestion dominated the “other” statement option but rather a number of suggestions from respondents listed below:

- “Best practices guide/knowing what is being done in other communities/web site with excellent research publications area.” (3 comments)
- Legislation/tighter legislation (2 comments).
- Funding from the Province.

- Staff time to coordinate ideas/intent in community.
- Public interest and grass roots organization.
- A national association similar to Federation of Canadian Municipalities.
- Development of business case.
- Involving professionals: architects and engineers.
- The publication of projects in local newspapers.

“Special Initiatives or Projects Your Municipality May Have Undertaken”

Respondents were given an opportunity at the end of the survey to tell me about any special initiatives or projects in their municipality. A sample of some of the responses to this question includes:

- Annual accessibility awards to business and an access guide for businesses.
- Joint Municipal Guidelines for Accessibility (undertaken by 3 municipalities).
- The Province of Québec implemented legislation that requires municipalities with populations over 15,000 to adopt and make public an annual action plan to “reduce barriers to integration.” The legislation is aiming to achieve “social, school and workplace Integration.” Québec City launched the process in the spring of 2005 and is preparing a plan of action. In 2006, the City will dialogue with the associated community organizations to develop a long-term vision (3 year, 5-year term). Future action plans will use this planning exercise.

- A new Area Rights Commission is being formed to advocate for people with intellectual disabilities – “we hope they may be able to assist us in identifying additional invisible barriers to be addressed.”
- “Our township had an Accessibility Workshop where we invited all the region’s social service agencies, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, the rehab centres, builders and developers and brainstormed on accessibility initiatives that our municipality could and should be working on. Guest speakers introduced universal and flex housing CMHC demonstration projects. We had a guest architectural speaker present on designing in the spirit of accessibility. Stats and trends. Retrofit projects. It was excellent.”

4.7 Summary of Key Findings

The purpose of this research paper is to examine the state of accessibility planning within mid-size (population 50,000-500,000) Canadian municipalities. Knowledge acquired will be applied to understand the effectiveness of various practices and to inform Canadian Planning practice. A web survey was developed that addresses respondents’:

- Understanding/awareness of accessibility planning in their municipality.
- Opinions on accessibility planning of other municipalities.
- Understanding of the involvement of persons with disabilities in the process of removing barriers to accessibility.

- Rating of factors affecting efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their communities, and
- Opinion about what would be helpful in accessibility planning.

The survey also asked open-ended questions regarding innovative and leading edge practices. The survey was administered to 72 mid-size municipalities across Canada. The following points summarize the key findings:

- Most respondents in this study (85%) believe they have an area or areas within their municipal setting notable for efforts to improve accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- Specific areas in municipalities consistently represented, as notable for their efforts to improve accessibility to persons with disabilities is Planning and Building, Parks and Recreation, Housing, Engineering and Public Works, Transportation, Traffic and Parking.
- A number of stakeholders are important to successful accessibility planning in mid-size municipalities including Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees, Municipal Staff, Elected Officials, Volunteers, the General Public and persons with disabilities.

- The involvement/participation and input of persons with disabilities is clearly essential to affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in mid-size settings with 92% of survey respondents indicating this as the most important factor to affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their communities. The nature of involvement of persons with disabilities varied from “complaint driven” (80% of respondents indicated that persons with disabilities reported accessibility problem areas in their municipalities) followed by more participatory involvement of persons with disabilities in site plan review, policy development and accessibility audits.
- The allocation of staff (76% of respondents) and financial resources (85% of respondents) were deemed “most important” to improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in mid-size municipalities. However, 73% of respondents indicated that knowledge of services needed by persons with disabilities was most important to effect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their community. Training for municipal staff was viewed as “most important” to affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities by 59% of respondents. Staff awareness of accessibility or human rights legislation was also seen as “most important” by 59% of survey respondents.

- The need for knowledge about the number of persons with disabilities living in the community was deemed only somewhat important (25%) by survey respondents. Co-ordination and information sharing with other municipalities was rated by just over a third of the respondents (40%) as only somewhat important to affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. Other factors reported affecting efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities included the buy in, political will and commitment of elected officials and staff, support from the province and the need for legislation.
- Guelph, Ontario was selected by most respondents when asked for their opinion on other municipalities notable for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities or if they knew of initiatives or programs by Canadian municipalities that were exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning. Guelph, Ontario and Peterborough, Ontario were also each received 15% of responses when survey respondents were asked to select one municipality they believed to be most notable for overall efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. Guelph, Ontario led the way again (14%) when respondents were asked to cite exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in their community. Both Brampton, Ontario, and Kitchener, Ontario each recorded 10% of responses when respondents were asked if they were aware of other municipalities that are undertaking innovative approaches to improve accessibility to persons with disabilities in their communities.

- Respondents indicated “no” to whether there were programs or initiatives in their municipalities that they considered being innovative in improving accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- When asked their opinion about what they would find helpful in accessibility planning, respondents indicated a preference for a networking/group association, tours of interesting/innovative examples of accessibility, and workshops/conferences/”e-newsletter” on what’s happening in the field of accessibility.

The next chapter presents conclusions based on the literature review and the survey results. It will also include recommendations for further research and practical recommendations for Canadian Planning practice.

Chapter 5 Conclusions and Recommendations for Action

This study set out to answer the primary research question: “Are planning instruments or other tools being used and how are they being used to remove barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities living in mid-size Canadian municipalities?” The overall purpose of the research study was to examine the state of accessibility planning within mid-size Canadian municipalities in order to understand the effectiveness of various practices and to inform Canadian Planning practice.

The first section of this Chapter presents conclusions concerning this study, specifically addressing each of the secondary research questions developed to provide the framework for this study. This section answers each of these questions connecting the study conclusions with the survey results and literature review. The second section recognizes municipal leaders and “best practices” in accessibility planning across the country. The third section outlines implications for further research in the area of accessibility planning, while the final section presents practical recommendations for Canadian Planning practice. Chapter 5 ends with a summary of the study conclusions and recommendations for action.

5.1 Study Conclusions

General Study Conclusions

The initial assumption early in this research study was that mid-size Canadian municipalities were, in fact, carrying out some form of accessibility planning – using planning instruments or other tools to remove barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities living in mid-size Canadian municipalities. The web survey findings have clearly verified this assumption with 85% of respondents indicating a specific municipal area/department notable for efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities within their community. Additionally, although the survey response rate in the Province of Québec (Phase 3 Québec 2005) was lower than the other two survey phases, the web survey was wide reaching with 52 surveys completed and a high overall response rate (72%). Numerous requests for a summary of survey results – “this is a very good tool. I would be interested in receiving a copy of the results of this survey” - directing me to the municipal website for documents to review and a willingness to be contacted for follow-up indicate a valid interest in the research topic. Staff from two municipalities in the Province of Québec independently contacted me following completion of the survey and spoke at length on the telephone about the new legislation in Québec and how it related to the legislation in Ontario, municipal accessibility planning for persons with disabilities, their delight at being contacted to participate in the survey and their

interest in receiving a summary of the results when complete. Most municipal staff across the country willingly shared success stories candidly detailed their areas of concern and 47 respondents provided contact information for follow-up.

Specific Area/Department or Areas/Departments Notable for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities

Both Parks and Recreation and Planning were noted as the top two areas/departments for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. It is not surprising that the area of Parks and Recreation was rated as notable by the greatest number of respondents because staff in the field of recreation (special and inclusive recreation services) has long been removing both physical (“physical accessibility”) and program (“program accessibility) barriers to persons with disabilities in municipal settings (Smith, Austin and Kennedy, 2001). In fact, I would argue that it was the early advocacy efforts of municipal recreation staff to create awareness in staff within other municipal departments of the barriers encountered by persons with disabilities that initially provided the accessibility planning leadership in removing barriers to the accessibility of persons with disabilities to municipal programs and services.

The area of Planning and Building followed closely behind the Parks and Recreation Department for notable efforts. Interestingly when one looks closer, the area of Planning and Building actually received more responses overall when one considers adding the area of Housing to the Planning and Building

responses as a key responsibility that falls within the field of Planning. A number of respondents in qualitative comments indicated specifically the area of Planning (Housing). No respondents indicated Transportation Planning specifically as an area of note; however, this, too, could be included within the scope of the field of Planning and efforts to remove barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

When respondents were asked in the survey question to identify the area or department or areas/departments within their municipality that were notable for efforts to improve accessibility in some cases (although not requested by the researcher), they detailed both the length of involvement in removing barriers in their municipality and “key” historical events that launched accessibility initiatives in their community. The following quote from a respondent illustrates the historical reference made to their municipal accessibility planning initiatives:

“The City of Prince George has established the Special Needs Advisory Committee. This committee advises the mayor and council on issues pertaining to access for people with disabilities in the community. The committee has been in existence since 1987 and was established when Rick Hansen came through Prince George on the Man in Motion World Tour.”

Obviously, a number of respondents felt it important to connect the area or department notable for efforts to improve accessibility in their municipality with the occurrence of a key community event that spurred the establishment of accessibility initiatives in their community.

The findings in Chapter 4 illustrate that respondents were able to specifically identify the area/department or areas/departments within their municipal structure notable for their efforts to improve accessibility. However, upon further analysis, it appeared there was no single predominant area or municipal department solely and consistently responsible for accessibility planning efforts in mid-size Canadian cities. This may explain the challenge I faced when attempting to locate the most appropriate and knowledgeable respondent to complete the survey in each of the 72 municipalities. The responsibility for Accessibility Planning could not be consistently attached to one municipal area or department in the municipality and once located within a department the position of the staff responsible crossed both professional designations and staffing levels within the organization. Interestingly, this is consistent with the finding of the American study which examined 20 cities in two states and attempted to identify factors that affect local government compliance with the municipal portion of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (Title II) (Vaughn Switzer, 2001). Vaughn Switzer (2001) described her struggles locating an ADA Co-ordinator within a study city and identifying who the person might be:

“ One of the most difficult tasks in this study was simply finding out whether or not the city had an ADA Co-ordinator, and if so, who the individual might be. In several instances, a call to the individual said to be the ADA Co-ordinator resulted in the person admitting they knew nothing about their designation, or explaining that there may have been some mistake” (Vaughn Switzer, 2001, p. 657).

Although Canadian municipalities are not required legally to have an “Accessibility Co-ordinator” as in the American setting, I found it equally difficult

at times to locate an appropriate staff person within the municipality to complete the survey as noted in the following quote from email correspondence:

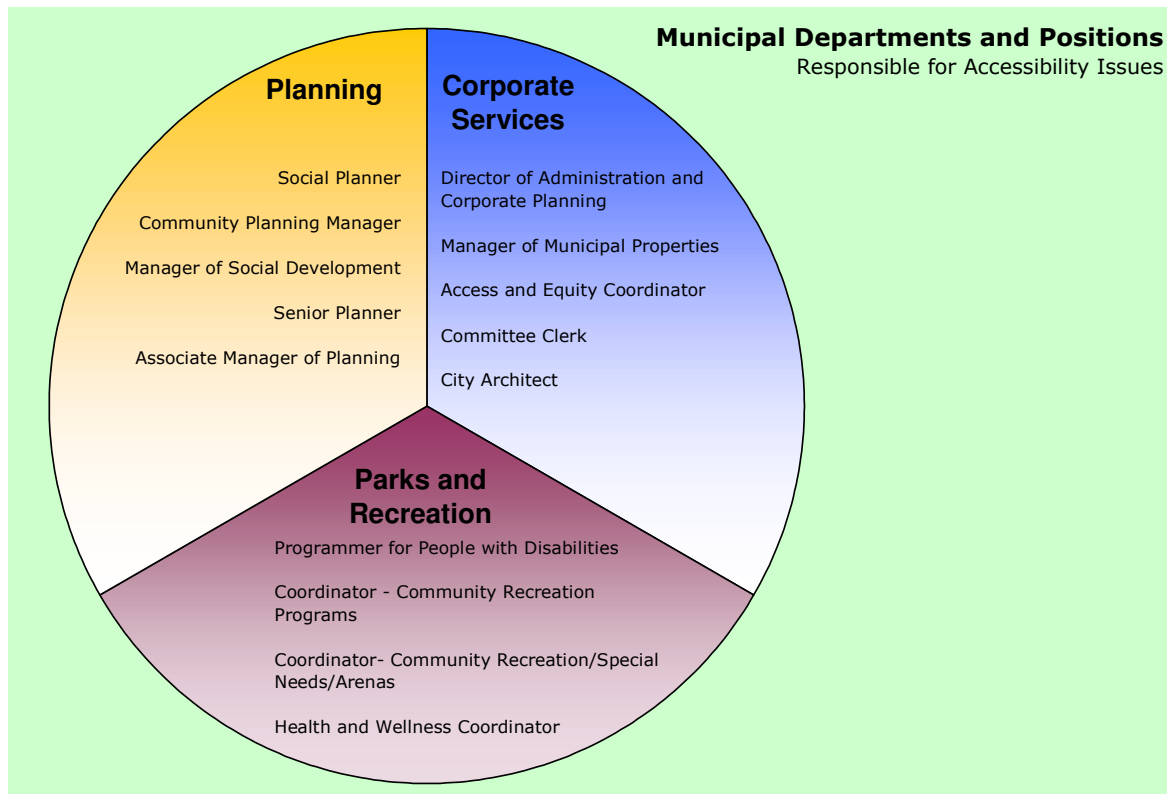
“Your email has arrived at my desk. I am fairly certain that the City of X does not have one single contact person regarding this issue.”

Conclusions can be drawn from these findings. In the mid-size Canadian municipality, it appears that staff with some responsibility for municipal accessibility planning can be found across departments. However, staff providing leadership to this area are found within one of three municipal departments. Figure 4 illustrates the actual position titles and areas/departments of responsibility of various survey respondents who replied indicating an interest in further research follow up.

The locus of responsibility for accessibility planning in Canadian mid-size municipalities in 2006 can generally be categorized under one of three main headings: Planning, Corporate Services or Parks and Recreation. Within those three categories, position titles and level of responsibility assigned to accessibility planning vary greatly from a programmer in Parks and Recreation to a City Architect in Corporate Services or a Community Planning Manager in Planning. Although not posed in the initial research questions, we can draw a general conclusion from this study that although accessibility planning takes place, it is

not a “defined” field of Planning or other profession at this time. Positions located within the Planning department addressing this area may focus on both physical planning (site plans and access) or social planning (removal of social or systemic or attitudinal barriers to access) or both. Positions in the Parks and Recreation department may strongly lean towards the removal of programming barriers in the leisure setting with the added responsibility of physical accessibility requirements for facilities. The positions within the Corporate Services area appear to be somewhat broader addressing “access and equity”, broader “corporate planning” and in some instances connected with municipal facilities management areas. Perhaps this is a reflection of the provision of corporate-wide services (general enquiries, registrations/licences or legislated or legal functions) to other departments and members of the community emanating from this municipal department. In Ontario, a number of municipalities have located accessibility planning staff within this department in response to the Provincial ODA and AODA legislation and to reflect the municipalities’ corporate wide responsibility to meet this legislation.

Figure 4 Municipal Departments and Positions



Source: Sanderson, 2006

Planning Instruments, the use of planning instruments and how this is being determined

This secondary research question was to identify the planning instruments being used in the design of open space and built environments in mid-size Canadian municipalities to remove physical barriers to persons with disabilities. The research findings indicate that the planning instruments primarily used to remove physical barriers and to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities are Guidelines and Standards, Site Plan Review and Renovation and Retrofit Programs.

Municipalities are active in each of these areas; however, in the area of Guidelines and Standards, some municipalities are moving beyond voluntary compliance in some areas of guideline and standard development (e.g. in the area of housing Adaptable Design guidelines for residential housing development are voluntary) and establishing local enforceable building and site plan standards to be met in the development (new or retrofit) of all municipally owned facilities (Facility Accessibility Design Standards). Although a number of respondents cited the use of Provincial Building Code (barrier free design) application in this area to address physical access, it appears that in some mid-size Canadian municipalities, local municipal Councils require that a higher standard of accessibility be met (“beyond the Building Code”) for their municipally owned facilities. A municipality that was selected as notable for its efforts to improve accessibility was described by a respondent as having “Very high standards for accessibility to municipal properties.” The carry-over of the application and compliance with these standards to private sector development, however, does not appear to be occurring at this time. Additionally, where possible, other broader public sector groups – such as school boards and hospitals - are working in partnership to develop and use these accepted standards.

Another area that has evolved and is continuing to evolve is the area of accessibility and Urban Design. A number of respondents addressed the use of planning instruments such as “Universal Access Design Guidelines” within this area of planning and credited the planning section of Urban Design as “very

proactive in ensuring universal design in its fundamental goals.” Municipal staff also appears to be taking the time to periodically review urban design standards where possible to ensure “they are not a barrier to persons with disabilities.”

In contrast to the production and use of Guidelines and Standards, Site Plan Review and approval in mid-size Canadian municipalities appears to be more process oriented and respondents clearly indicated the importance of the participation of accessibility/disability issue advisory committee members or persons with a disability in this part of municipal development review. The form of involvement was often consultative where either an individual or a committee is consulted. In the case of committee consultation, it is novel and of interest to note that in one or two municipalities, Councils had established a Municipal Advisory Design Panel for all public and private development. This panel of community stakeholders was unique because all development projects were referred to this panel for review, and one representative from a local disability organization sat as a member on this committee with other stakeholders.

This was not the common practice of most mid-size Canadian municipalities, where planning staff would consult primarily with a committee solely of persons with disabilities in the absence of other stakeholders. The only other example similar to this inclusive approach taken above is in one municipality where Council established a “Municipal Advisory Committee” where Council received feedback on a number of municipal issues – a person with a disability was

represented along with others as a citizen stakeholder on this committee. Finally, the Site Plan and approval process is the one area where it appears that municipal planners and persons with disabilities can push for greater accessibility in the private sector however as one respondent noted: “we are relying on the persuasion and goodwill of the developer/owner when dealing with existing structures to improve and make accessible.”

The third primary planning instrument used to remove physical barriers to persons with disabilities is Renovation and Retrofit Programs. This area of the three solely addressed improving physical accessibility to municipally owned facilities and properties and in most cases distinct from other planning instruments involved an outlay of annual capital expenditures (“Accessibility or Building Funds”) by individual Councils. In order to carry out these programs, municipalities often undertook comprehensive “accessibility audits” of existing facilities in order to prepare long range capital planning estimates and to undertake removing physical barriers in priority order. These audits, often led by building or facility management staff or outside consultants, were done in numerous municipalities in collaboration with persons with disabilities whose primary role was to advise of problem areas as illustrated in the following quote:

“An assessment was carried out by the Mayors Advisory Council with respect to accessibility of all government (federal, provincial and municipal) buildings in the X city area. This gave a clear indication of how much work had to be done and provides the city with a working document”

Zoning By-laws (provision of dedicated parking spaces for persons with disabilities) in municipalities and the Municipal Official (Community Plan in Western Canada) Plan were rarely mentioned as tools used to enhance accessibility. Research in Britain (Imrie, 1999) has shown that the Official Plan of a municipality can also be used to make a broad statement regarding accessibility and removing physical and other barriers to persons with disabilities. However, in the Canadian mid-size municipality setting, the Official Plan is not currently considered a key tool for accessibility.

Other tools available to gain greater accessibility for persons with disabilities, the use of other tools and how this is being determined

Other “tools” used by municipalities to remove barriers to and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in mid-size Canadian municipalities are numerous; they may be either corporate wide or department specific in nature, and fall under three main themes: Policy & Legislation, Programs and Practices.

Policy & Legislation

Policy development was a key tool used in various municipalities to remove barriers to corporate and departmental programs and services. Policy development occurs in collaboration with persons with disabilities. The level of

involvement of persons with disabilities ranges from consultative to policy development committee membership. Corporate policy to address the needs of persons with hearing, visual or other disabilities was addressed by the implementation of municipal “Guidelines for Accessible Literature” and “Multiple Format” policies. Department specific policy included some municipal Recreation Departments formalizing their services with a “Policy for Leisure Services for Persons with a Disability” or the adoption of “active living” principles. Human Resources (employment and equity policy) and Housing and Transportation policy specific to the needs of persons with disabilities were also being used to provide greater access to persons with disabilities within specific municipal departments. Less formal policy was also followed in a number of municipal departments. This included “Guidelines for Outdoor Accessibility” in Parks Departments, and a “Behaviour Checklist” to enable the participation of children in municipal recreation programs. Noticeably absent from the realm of corporate policy was the use by municipalities of an overriding or global corporate wide “Accessibility Policy” or guiding statement to enable access to municipal services by persons with disabilities.

In the Province of Ontario, legislation (ODA, 2001 and AODA, 2005) is another tool used by planners and others to remove barriers to persons with disabilities. Municipalities with over 10,000 population are legislated to prepare an annual corporate accessibility plan and to provide accessibility committees with site plans they request for review. The Province of Québec has similar accessibility

planning legislation for municipalities with over 15,000 population in size.

Research has shown that awareness of legislation by staff is important to effect implementation of accessibility planning. In the Vaughn Switzer (2001) study, staff in “progressive cities” was as Vaughn Switzer notes:

...“extremely knowledgeable about provisions of the ADA and kept abreast of emerging developments...they allocated funds for staff to attend workshops and conferences and made it a priority to keep department heads as well as most city employees aware of changes in the law.” (Vaughn Switzer, 2001, p. 658).

Programs and Practices

Mid-size Canadian municipalities undertake a range of programs to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. Unique examples of programs and services include the municipal funding of local Disability or Access Resource Centres employed by persons with disabilities, and a “Universal Housing Demonstration Housing Project.” The largest area of programs is in municipal Recreation departments through the delivery of specialized and/or inclusive recreation programs for persons with disabilities.

A number of municipalities undertake both corporate and departmental practices to remove barriers to persons with disabilities. Corporate-wide practices employed to improve access to services include “awareness” training of all municipal staff, enhanced websites for greater accessibility to persons with disabilities, installation of TTY lines (teletypewriter) for persons who are deaf, creation of a City Access Guidebook with detailed accessibility information to

civic facilities, and the provision of municipal documents in alternate formats (large print, Braille, clear or plain language formats). Examples of additional departmental practices include reviews of transit and mobility bus operations, and the establishment of a committee in the Recreation Department to address why so few persons with disabilities are participating in municipal leisure programs.

Key Stakeholders involved in the implementation and use of planning instruments and other tools

As presented in Chapter Four, there are six main categories of stakeholders involved in the implementation of accessibility planning (both planning instruments and tools). These categories are:

- Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committee
- Municipal Staff
- Elected Officials
- Volunteers
- General Public
- Persons with Disabilities

Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committee

Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees assume a variety of roles in the implementation of municipal accessibility planning. These committees were identified by many respondents in qualitative comments as the venue for ensuring the corporate decision making process on barrier removal was inclusive of persons with disabilities.

This finding is consistent with the limited research that has been carried out in this area. In the American study (Vaughn Switzer, 2001) the “establishment of municipal commissions on disability” (or accessibility committees) was the most common method of involving persons with disabilities in municipal accessibility efforts. In-depth research in Great Britain (Imrie, 1999) examined the role of accessibility/disability issue advisory committees and their ability to influence local accessibility practices/policies. The question behind this research was “are access groups a means of enabling persons with disabilities or are they merely a means for local planning authorities to meet their responsibility to consult with persons with disabilities?” (Imrie, 1999). Imrie (1999) suggested that, in some instances, access committees were set up to fulfil the perception by the local Council that they were responding to the legislative mandate to have a process of consultation with persons with disabilities and not established necessarily to advance the equity of persons with disabilities. He concluded that the ability of the access committee to influence local accessibility practices and policies depended very much on the “degree and type” of support provided by the local

government and the larger socio-political values within which the committee operated (Imrie, 1999).

Municipal Staff

In the qualitative comments collected from the web survey, respondents described both departmental and individual staff participation in accessibility planning. The type of involvement varied from individual staff communication from staff persons in certain departments, to a reporting relationship with members of the accessibility/disability issue advisory committee. The research questions of this study, however, did not address the effectiveness of municipal staff to implement accessibility planning efforts in their municipality.

Elected Officials

The results of the web survey indicated that over three-quarters of respondents felt that interaction or interest from elected officials was a most important factor to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in their community. Although this response indicates the belief by respondents that the involvement of elected officials is important, research has documented that in the American experience elected officials considered legislative compliance to be the responsibility of staff. The cities in the American sample closely resemble the Canadian mid-size municipalities with a Council-manager form of government.

Volunteers and the General Public

Although a number of qualitative comments were made by web survey respondents regarding the involvement of volunteers and the general public in accessibility planning, very little research is available to further document the roles of these two groups. Further research is necessary to explore the roles that volunteers and the general public play in advancing the planning of accessible municipalities.

Persons with Disabilities

Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees are one way to involve persons with disabilities in accessibility planning. In many cases (as documented by qualitative comments from the web survey), this seems the most common approach in mid-size Canadian municipalities to consulting with persons with disabilities in order to remove barriers to accessibility.

Persons with Disabilities also assume other roles in accessibility planning. The primary roles reported in the web survey are those of reporting accessibility problem areas, followed by review of site plan drawings, participation in policy development, and accessibility audits. It became evident from the qualitative comments from respondents, however, that the participation of persons with disabilities was not only essential to improve accessibility in mid-size Canadian

municipalities, but also encompassed key areas of advocacy, education, and recognition.

Other persons involved in accessibility planning efforts and mentioned only by respondents in a limited manner yet cited in the literature and worthy of inclusion as *key stakeholders* are those persons or businesses in the private sector – these may include developers, the construction industry, builders and of particular interest the tourism industry. Figure 5 illustrates the interlocking roles of stakeholders in accessibility planning efforts in mid-size Canadian municipalities as identified by respondents in the web survey. Persons with disabilities are placed in the centre of the diagram to illustrate the importance of their participation with all stakeholders in efforts to remove barriers to accessibility. The addition of the Private/Business sector to this diagram completes the stakeholders involved in the implementation of initiatives to remove barriers to accessibility for Canadians in mid-size municipal settings.

Figure 5 Key Stakeholders



Financial and other resources being allocated to the implementation of planning instruments and other tools

It appears that financial and/or other resources are allocated to the implementation of accessibility planning in mid-size Canadian cities. Although this study did not specifically attempt to measure the type or percentage of allocation of resources in mid-size Canadian municipalities, a number of

respondents indicated both capital and operating funding of accessibility and the dedication of human resources to this area.

Capital funding included the dedication of an annual amount of money to modify municipal building and facilities, to remove physical or architectural barriers, or monies allocated to a “building fund” for facility retrofits. Capital budgets for accessibility planning were also department specific – for example, capital funding for bus stop or curb upgrades or an annual capital budget to install and maintain audible traffic signals. One municipality of 70,000-80,000 in population reported a very successful partnership between a local service club to purchase audible traffic signals and the municipality to provide labour for installation and ongoing maintenance to ensure every intersection was equipped with audible signals.

Specific dollars for operating budgets (dollars for staffing, grants, operation of committees, project/program development, etc.) was reported to a much lesser extent. However, examples of funding in this area included:

- financial and human resources allocated to the development of accessibility standards/assessment tool
- annual operating funding of the accessibility/disability issue advisory committee by Council, and

- funding of an “accessibility guide” for businesses and provision of cash grants to the local accessibility committee for awareness planning

When it comes to the application of resources to the implementation of planning instruments in mid-size Canadian municipalities, 85% of respondents felt that dedicating financial resources to improving accessibility was most important.

While just slightly lower, 76% of respondents indicated that the allocation of staff resources to this area was a most important factor. Despite these very high percentages rating the significance of financial and human resources, a number of comments were made that indicated that simply “adopting accessibility practices” that met the needs of persons with disabilities living in the community was more important than money or other resources. This often doesn’t cost any more, rather, it is a matter of integrating these into standard practices within municipal operations.

This is somewhat consistent with the findings from the American study (Vaughn Switzer, 2001), which assessed the factors affecting the implementation of the ADA legislation in 20 cities. This study concluded that funding alone was not the sole determinant of legislative implementation and compliance. Almost all of the cities in this study that developed a transition plan (in other words, an accessibility planning process) outlining actions and improvements each year appeared to have committed to a plan of priorities to meet the legislative requirements. This could be said to be the equivalent of a process of adopting

and integrating accessibility planning practices into municipal operations – including the corporate and departmental business planning cycles.

Evaluation methods being used to measure the effectiveness of planning instruments and other tools

While the intent of this study was to examine the state of accessibility planning in mid-size Canadian municipalities, no specific question was included in the web survey to address whether municipalities used evaluation methods to determine the effectiveness of planning instruments or other tools. This was an omission by the researcher when designing the web survey. However, the need for evaluation and measures of accessibility planning will be discussed further under implications for further research and recommendations for Canadian planning practice.

Other Factors Affecting Efforts to Improve Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The greatest number of other factors cited by respondents in the findings chapter fell under the areas of “buy in, political will and commitment.” A number of additional factors that were unable to be categorized were noted that are worthy of mention at this time. In the area of removing barriers to municipal programs and services in general, two respondents indicated accessibility efforts would be improved by “having a person with a disability in a high profile position i.e. an elected official or on staff” or simply by “increasing the employment of persons

with disabilities in the municipality.” One respondent commented that “public safety concerns” can affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities

The “fluctuating attendance” of persons with disabilities at meetings was noted because “these members have more “bad days” (i.e. bad weather affecting electronic lifts and snow removal) and mobility issues. This factor makes it very difficult to run effective meetings on a regular basis.” A municipality bordering on Toronto commented that the “heritage, culture and value base of a community” could influence efforts to improve accessibility, perhaps indicating challenges faced by the notion of disability in various ethno-cultural contexts. Finally, one respondent indicated an “other” factor they believed affected efforts to improve accessibility was merely...“overcoming the barrier of ‘accepting the way it is’”. After a lifetime of no accessibility, the right to have accessibility is difficult to grasp for some people, especially the older disabled.”

5.2 Best Practices – Municipal Leaders in Accessibility Planning In Canada

Guelph, Ontario, Peterborough, Ontario and Brampton, Ontario have been selected as “best practice” examples of municipal leaders in accessibility planning in Canada. Each of these municipalities consistently appeared in the top selections of respondents to the four ranking questions in the web survey.

The City of Guelph, Ontario

Survey respondents recognized the Guelph, Ontario both as a municipality notable for its efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities (specific area/areas) and as a municipality that undertook initiatives or programs that were exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning.

“The City of Guelph has had a Disability Coordinator since 1995 and has been involved in accessibility planning long before the province passed the ODA. Guelph is often consulted by other municipalities on the many programs and services it now offers. There are 4 Barrier Free committees as well as an AAC working to remove barriers. There is also a committee recently formed (Access Guelph) that advocates for accessibility within the private sector. Guelph has developed many programs that have been adopted by other municipalities. They have a great volunteer base and City staff member who is committed to accessibility planning.”

“The City of Guelph has done very well to roll inclusion service and access into their everyday way of providing services. Guelph Council has recently supported the creation of the first ever Inclusion Co-ordinator position, which gives the city an upper edge on advancing access, due to constant attention through staff support. Guelph has designed a set of technical standards used throughout the province and municipal staff seem to get the BIG PICTURE when it comes to accessibility planning, as they have been doing this for years prior to the ODA. Staff support makes a large difference in the success of your planning, as city staff make it happen from within!”

“They embraced the concept of Accessibility Planning long before they ODA. The policies and procedures adopted by Council and staff are progressive.”

Source: Survey Data

The City of Peterborough, Ontario

When considering the complete range of municipal services, survey respondents selected the Peterborough, Ontario as the one municipality (from the list of 72 municipalities) they believed to be most notable for overall efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. Additionally, Peterborough ranked 2nd to the Guelph, Ontario as a municipality notable for its efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities (specific area/areas).

“Peterborough started accessibility planning long before it became legislated.”

Accessibility Planning has been operating out of the Planning Dept for 10+ years. They have a building fund for retrofits, guidelines and great community buy in. Very successful model and very willing to share their expertise. “The movement towards accessibility in Peterborough has great momentum that predates passage of the ODA. Very proactive and enthusiastic staff.”

“Peterborough has been proactive for years-”

“Accessibility Committee has been in place for 10 years +. Community has made accessibility a quality of life priority.”

“Very high standards for accessibility to municipal properties. Pay attention to the needs of the disabled.”

Source: Survey Data

The City of Brampton, Ontario

Survey respondents identified the Brampton, Ontario as undertaking innovative approaches to improve accessibility. Although one other municipality was also selected as a leader in this area, Brampton, Ontario also ranked high (2nd place to the Guelph, Ontario) when naming a municipality that undertook initiatives or

programs that were exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning.

...”Brampton has taken an early leadership role since the ODA came into play.”

“I’m thinking with the staff person’s enthusiasm they must be moving Brampton forward in a positive manner around access.”

Source: Survey Data

Best Practices- Municipalities Receiving Honourable Mention In Accessibility Planning In Canada

Kitchener, Ontario, and London, Ontario were selected by respondents more than once in each municipal rating question. Each of these cities received notable comments by respondents and they are “best practice” examples – municipalities receiving honourable mention in accessibility planning in Canada.

The City of Kitchener, Ontario

Survey respondents selected the Kitchener, Ontario in each of the four municipal rating questions – other municipality notable for its efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities (specific area/areas), one municipality notable for overall efforts, exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning and innovative approaches to improving accessibility in their communities.

“Leaders in K-W in removing barriers and willingness to share successes with others.”

Source: Survey Data

The City of London, Ontario

London, Ontario was recognized in the areas of other municipality notable for its efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities (specific area/areas) and one municipality notable for overall efforts.

“London led the way with extensive and enforceable Universal Design requirements.”

“Universal accessible design guidelines and enforceability.”

“Developed Facility Accessibility Design Standards. Put the financial and human resources into standards that can be used throughout Ontario.”

Source: Survey Data

The **City of Sault Ste Marie, Ontario** and the **District of North Vancouver, British Columbia** also both stand out as mid-size Canadian municipalities that should receive “Honourable Mention” as selected by survey respondents. These two mid-size municipalities were selected by respondents for exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning (Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario) and other municipality notable for its efforts

to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities (specific area/areas) (District of North Vancouver, B.C.).

Other Municipalities

A number of large Canadian municipalities were also selected by respondents in the municipal rating section of the survey. It is clear from the significant percentage of respondents who selected these other larger municipalities that respondents believe that leadership and innovation may be more likely to come from these larger cities. However, this research has shown that innovative and noteworthy practices are occurring in mid-size Canadian municipalities and it may be a matter that staff within these municipalities is unaware of the excellence in accessibility planning practices available in these settings. These larger municipalities are the City of North Vancouver, British Columbia; Ottawa, Ontario; Mississauga, Ontario; Toronto, Ontario; and The Region of Peel, Ontario. Where available from the data, I have provided quotes identifying these other municipalities by respondents, indicating why they selected these “other municipalities” in the four ranking questions in the survey.

City of North Vancouver, British Columbia

The City of North Vancouver, British Columbia was selected by respondents in the areas of other municipality notable for its efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities (specific area/areas), one municipality notable for efforts and exceptional examples of involving persons with disabilities.

The City of North Vancouver (I didn't see it in your box above"). In addition to initiatives that are similar to the District, they have allowed homeowners to have a second "suite" in a single family home if it is made accessible. Increased access to low cost accessible housing."

"It may not qualify because of its population size, but the City of North Vancouver has made a lot of progress in achieving accessibility in their multi family housing. They are also currently reviewing their parking regulations:-"

Source: Survey Data

City of Ottawa, Ontario

Survey respondents selected Ottawa, Ontario as other municipality notable for efforts to improve accessibility and undertaking innovative approaches to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

"I selected Ottawa which is not on your list because of their multiple format policy."

Source: Survey Data

5.3 Implications for Further Research

Research in accessibility planning is scarce, and certainly in Canada this area of research is just beginning to emerge. Recommendations for further research in this area include:

- In-depth case studies should be completed of the municipal leaders or “best practice” municipalities identified in this research and their approach to accessibility planning. The framework of the nine factors affecting efforts to improve accessibility in Canadian mid-size municipalities should be adapted from the Vaughn Switzer (2001) study.
- Carry out research that examines the role and effectiveness of Accessibility/Disability Issue Advisory Committees. In Canada, some committees are mandated under provincial legislation, but a number are not mandated. Research in this area could address the opinions of both staff and members of the committees. A case study format could examine the effectiveness of different types of committees through interviews, visiting communities, attending and observing meetings. This could include participatory action research with members of municipal accessibility/disability issue advisory committees.
- Examine the accessibility planning initiatives in Canadian large size (over 500,000) population municipalities to compare/contrast practices with mid-size cities.

- Investigate methods of evaluating the effectiveness of accessibility planning at the municipal level. This may be particularly applicable in the Province of Ontario as the ODA, 2001 has been legislated for five years at present and an evaluation of its effectiveness may be warranted prior to the repeal of this legislation and replacement with the “accessibility standards” of the AODA, 2005 expected imminently.

5.4 Recommendations for Canadian Planning Practice

A number of recommendations can be made for advancing the area of accessibility planning within Canadian planning practice. The planning profession can now begin to develop a number of ways for both current students and accessibility planning practitioners in the field to enhance their knowledge and skills. There will be a growing interest and need to provide both policy development and relevant academic training to students in this field of study and professional opportunities for upgrading to meet the interest and demand for knowledge by planning practitioners and those in other fields.

The recommendations provided in this section are based upon a summary of the data provided by the web survey respondents, the researcher’s knowledge of what is currently available in Canada, and a review of established models of Accessibility Planning in other countries.

National Association or Network of Canadian Accessibility Planners

Well over three-quarters of respondents indicated a need to create a national group or association of practitioners that work in the field of Accessibility Planning. Suggestions included a national association or affiliation similar to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). There is merit in this recommendation. In 1994, the National Action Committee on Municipal Access of FCM produced one of the earliest and often cited “tools” by practitioners for municipal staff working to remove barriers to accessibility in municipalities – “A How-to Manual on Municipal Access (FCM, 1994), and a year later, a policy statement on municipal access for persons with disabilities. The policy statement reads...”the Federation of Canadian Municipalities is committed to a barrier-free Canada and to eliminating physical, systemic and attitudinal barriers that prevent persons with visible or invisible disabilities from participating in community life” (FCM, 1994).

It may also be timely to reinstate the “Five- Star Community Awards Program”, originally delivered through the FCM, which recognized municipalities for their outstanding work in improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in the five Star areas of Transportation, Housing, Employment, Recreation and Education. This program was discontinued in the late 1990s when the federal government withdrew national funding for National Access Awareness Week initiatives (that had been celebrated since 1987) across the country.

However, times have changed, and the collective voice of the increasing number of municipal staff working in the area of accessibility planning in municipalities across this country, along with greater numbers of persons with disabilities involved in local municipal accessibility/disability issue advisory bodies, may warrant the approach to FCM to consider the development of a branch of Accessibility Planning linked with the FCM.

An affiliation with FCM would certainly address the needs of those staff working in the municipal setting. However, there are a number of individuals/organizations currently in the private sector carrying out accessibility planning that would therefore not benefit from this alliance. Therefore, it is recommended that the development of any national association would not be in isolation but in consultation/collaboration with the Canadian Institute of Planners. This would allow for an association that represents accessibility planning (land use, housing, social and transportation planning) in its broadest sense.

Accessibility Planning curriculum development at the Post Secondary level

With the growing interest in creating more accessible communities and, in some cases, legislation bringing forth mandated compliance within municipalities across the country, students enrolled in Schools of Planning will require training to be prepared to address accessibility issues. This should include knowledge of legislated requirements (for example, site plan review where legislated by the

province) under applicable provincial Planning Acts or Accessibility Legislation (Province of Ontario and Province of Québec) and initial exposure to the barriers faced by persons with disabilities and the provision of knowledge to address accessibility issues from both a theoretical and practical standpoint. Additionally, design courses in Canadian Schools of Planning and Architecture should be strongly encouraged to adopt curriculum in the area of universal design. This recommendation is supported by the adoption in 2001 by the 43 member countries of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (Partial Agreement in the Social and Public Health Field) of a Resolution on the introduction of the principles of universal design into the curricula of all occupations working on the built environment. The Council of Europe Resolution on Universal Design recommends:

“The incorporation of universal design principles into the curricula of architects, engineers and town planners, and, by and large, into the training of all vocations working on the built environment.” (Council of Europe, 2001).

Accessibility Planning Research

The area of Accessibility Planning Research was noted by a number of web survey respondents. Practitioners in the field are interested in gathering knowledge on practical examples of what is happening in other communities and research publications that illustrate innovation in this field.

5.5 Summary

This study concludes that planning instruments are being used to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in mid-size Canadian municipalities. Planners clearly have the opportunity now to take a strong leadership role in creating more accessible cities in Canada and as one survey respondent eloquently noted when asked to describe other factors affecting efforts to improve accessibility:

“As planners we need to incorporate the future impact of our aging population on future trends and needs of our community. It is apparent that as the population ages, access for persons with disabilities becomes of greater importance. We should be planning and developing accessible facilities now, for this future need.”

Planning tools used the most in Canadian MSCs are guidelines and standards, the site plan review process and renovation and retrofit programs. Persons with disabilities participate as “consultants” in this process; however, this role is one that is important in the removal of physical barriers to persons with disabilities. Planners could now also take it upon themselves to use Zoning bylaws and Official Plans as new tools to further enhance physical accessibility in cities. The use of these tools by Canadian planners is noticeably absent at present.

Planning tools are not the only way to remove barriers to persons with disabilities. It is evident from this study that planners and other staff often work within the framework of provincial legislation and municipal policies. Staff in most provinces use less formal ways of improving accessibility through the delivery of innovative programs and practices, sometimes developed in partnership with other community organizations.

Inherent in all efforts to remove barriers in Canadian mid-size municipalities is the active involvement of persons with disabilities. As one respondent proudly noted:

“The Mayor’s Advisory Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities has accomplished a great deal over the past fourteen years since its inception in 1991. The volunteer members involved who represent various community groups with disabilities *have brought to the forefront* a great cross section of accessibility issues such as mobility, hearing, vision and intellectual disabilities, all of which require special attention. Though the City continues to address the challenges of accommodating these special needs, it is at least more aware of the needs of the people involved and hopefully more cognizant of these needs during their planning processes.” (Source: Survey Data)

Continuing to involve persons with disabilities in the development and application of planning instruments and other tools has the potential to build the foundation of successful accessibility planning efforts in Canadian mid-size communities into the future.

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Appendix A

Glossary

Accommodation

One or more modifications that provide an equal opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of a program or activity by overcoming the functional limitations resulting either from a person's disability or from the lack of physical access. Examples include relocating an event to a facility that is accessible, providing an aide (such as someone to act as a reader), providing a sign language interpreter, or using a listening system. It could even mean broadcasting a public hearing on the local publicly owned television station and providing time following the hearing for people to submit their comments (either written or taped) before taking any action.

Source: Removing Barriers: A Guide for Including People with Disabilities in the Planning Process. Burlington Planning Commission, Burlington Vermont. 1990.

Accessible

Accessibility means that a program, activity, meeting, hearing, or other event or process is readily usable by an individual, regardless of his or her abilities. When

used in reference to a building or facility, it means that a facility can be approached, entered and used by any individual, regardless of his or her abilities.

Source: Planning for Barrier Free Municipalities, Queens Printer for Ontario. 2005.

Barrier

Barrier as defined by the Ontarians with Disabilities Act , 2001 means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, technological barrier, a policy or practice.

Source: Planning for Barrier Free Municipalities, Queens Printer for Ontario. 2005.

Barrier-Free

Barrier-Free as defined by the Ontario Building Code means that a building and its facilities can be approached, entered and used by persons with physical and sensory disabilities.

Source: Planning for Barrier Free Municipalities, Queens Printer for Ontario.
2005.

Barrier Free Design

Barrier Free design is predominantly a disability-focused movement and uses building codes, regulations and guidelines to achieve designs and features that are usable by persons with disabilities.

Source: Quoted in Accessibility for All: Universal Design: Waterloo Region Trends Research Project. Issues Paper 2. April 2001.

Built Environment

The built environment comprises the houses, parks, industrial plants, institutions, stores and offices, streets and highways, and other transportation facilities. All of these elements, directly or indirectly, involve the existing and prospective use of land, both from the public and private point of view.

Source: Holten, 2001.

Disablism

A term that refers to societal prejudices, oppression, and discrimination against persons with disabilities purely on the basis of their physical and/or mental impairments.

Source: Imrie, 1996.

Universal Design

The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

Principles of Universal Design

Principle One: Equitable use. The design is useful and marketable to any group of users.

Principle Two: Flexibility in use. The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Principle Three: Simple and intuitive use. Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Principle Four: Perceptible information. The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Principle Five: Tolerance for error. The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Principle Six: Low physical effort. The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Principle Seven: Size and space for approach and use. Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Source: The Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University, 1995.

Inclusive Design

Inclusive design is “a development of the principles of universal design. Inclusive design seeks to prioritize building users' views and values and to challenge the social and institutional, as well as technical, relations of design and building processes. Inclusive design requires designers to adopt a certain type of design

approach that sets out to include as many people as possible, without denying the need for design solutions to meet the needs of specific types of impairments. Inclusion in the design and development of the built environment is not a disability issue per se; it is an equity and quality (of life) issue for everyone.”

Source: Inclusive Design: Designing and Developing Accessible Environments (Imrie and Hall, 2001, p. 18)

Municipalities Included in Survey

Phase 1 (2004)

| Municipality | Population | | |
|---------------------|------------|------------------------------|--------|
| Hamilton, ON | 490,268 | Whitby, ON | 87,413 |
| Halifax R. M., NS | 359,111 | Pickering, ON | 87,139 |
| Surrey, BC | 347,825 | District of Langley, BC | 86,896 |
| London, ON | 336,539 | Waterloo, ON | 86,543 |
| Brampton, ON | 325,428 | District of N. Vancouver, BC | 82,310 |
| Markham, ON | 208,615 | Niagara Falls, ON | 78,815 |
| Saskatoon, SK | 196,811 | Kamloops, BC | 77,281 |
| Burnaby, BC | 193,954 | Sault Ste. Marie, ON | 74,566 |
| Kitchener, ON | 190,399 | Victoria, BC | 74,125 |
| Vaughan, ON | 182,022 | Ajax, ON | 73,753 |
| Regina, SK | 178,225 | Nanaimo, BC | 73,000 |
| Greater Sudbury, ON | 155,219 | Prince George, BC | 72,406 |
| Burlington, ON | 150,836 | Strathcona County, AB | 71,986 |
| Oakville, ON | 144,738 | Peterborough, ON | 71,446 |
| Oshawa, ON | 139,051 | Sarnia, ON | 70,876 |
| Richmond Hill, ON | 132,030 | Saint John, NB | 69,661 |
| St. Catharines, ON | 129,170 | Kawartha Lakes, ON | 69,179 |
| Abbotsford, BC | 115,463 | Red Deer, AB | 67,707 |
| Kingston, ON | 114,195 | Lethbridge, AB | 67,374 |
| Coquitlam, BC | 112,890 | Newmarket, ON | 65,788 |
| Cambridge, ON | 110,372 | Moncton, NB | 61,046 |
| Thunder Bay, ON | 109,016 | Norfolk County, ON | 60,847 |
| Guelph, ON | 106,170 | St. Albert, AB | 53,081 |
| Barrie, ON | 103,710 | North Bay, ON | 52,771 |
| Delta, BC | 96,950 | Port Coquitlam, BC | 51,257 |
| Kelowna, BC | 96,288 | Medicine Hat, AB | 51,249 |
| | | Caledon, ON | 50,595 |

Phase 2 (2005)

| Municipality | Population |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Windsor, ON | 208,402 |
| Richmond, BC | 164,345 |
| Chatham-Kent, ON | 107,341 |
| Cape Breton R. M., NS | 105,968 |
| District of Saanich, BC | 103,654 |
| St. John's, NL | 99,182 |
| Brantford, ON | 86,417 |
| Clarington, ON | 69,834 |
| District of Maple Ridge, BC | 63,169 |
| Chilliwack, BC | 62,927 |
| New Westminster, BC | 54,656 |

Phase 3 (Quebec 2005)

| Municipality | Population |
|--------------------|------------|
| Laval, QC | 343,005 |
| Québec, QC * | 169,076 |
| Longueuil, QC | 128,016 |
| Gatineau, QC | 102,898 |
| Sherbrooke, QC | 75,916 |
| Repentigny, QC | 54,550 |
| Trois-Rivières, QC | |
| Lévis, QC* | |

Canadian Mid-size Municipalities (MSCs)

Quebec

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Laval | 343,005 |
| Québec | 169,076 |
| Longueuil | 128,016 |
| Gatineau | 102,898 |
| Sherbrooke | 75,916 |
| Repentigny | 54,550 |

Ontario

| | |
|------------------|---------|
| Hamilton | 490,268 |
| London | 336,539 |
| Brampton | 325,428 |
| Markham | 208,615 |
| Windsor | 208,402 |
| Kitchener | 190,399 |
| Vaughan | 182,022 |
| Greater Sudbury | 155,219 |
| Burlington | 150,836 |
| Oakville | 144,738 |
| Oshawa | 139,051 |
| Richmond Hill | 132,030 |
| St. Catharines | 129,170 |
| Kingston | 114,195 |
| Cambridge | 110,372 |
| Thunder Bay | 109,016 |
| Chatham-Kent | 107,341 |
| Guelph | 106,170 |
| Barrie | 103,710 |
| Whitby | 87,413 |
| Pickering | 87,139 |
| Waterloo | 86,543 |
| Brantford | 86,417 |
| Niagara Falls | 78,815 |
| Sault Ste. Marie | 74,566 |
| Ajax | 73,753 |
| Peterborough | 71,446 |
| Sarnia | 70,876 |
| Clarington | 69,834 |
| Kawartha Lakes | 69,179 |
| Newmarket | 65,788 |
| Norfolk County | 60,847 |
| North Bay | 52,771 |
| Caledon | 50,595 |

Newfoundland and Labrador

| | |
|------------|--------|
| St. John's | 99,182 |
|------------|--------|

Nova Scotia

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Halifax R. M. | 359,111 |
| Cape Breton R. M. | 105,968 |

New Brunswick

| | |
|------------|--------|
| Moncton | 61,046 |
| Saint John | 69,661 |

Saskatchewan

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| Saskatoon | 196,811 |
| Regina | 178,225 |

Alberta

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strathcona County | 71,986 |
| Red Deer | 67,707 |
| Lethbridge | 67,374 |
| St. Albert | 53,081 |
| Medicine Hat | 51,249 |

British Columbia

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Surrey | 347,825 |
| Burnaby | 193,954 |
| Richmond | 164,345 |
| Abbotsford | 115,463 |
| Coquitlam | 112,890 |
| District of Saanich | 103,654 |
| Delta | 96,950 |
| Kelowna | 96,288 |
| District of Langley | 86,896 |
| District of N. Vancouver | 82,310 |
| Kamloops | 77,281 |
| Victoria | 74,125 |
| Nanaimo | 73,000 |
| Prince George | 72,406 |
| District of Maple Ridge | 63,169 |
| Chilliwack | 62,927 |
| New Westminster | 54,656 |
| Port Coquitlam | 51,257 |

Appendix B

| Other Municipalities That Are Notable for Their Efforts in a Specific Area or Areas | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|----|
| Municipality | Responses | | |
| Guelph, ON | 11% | Caledon, ON | 1% |
| Peterborough, ON | 7% | Greater Sudbury, ON | 1% |
| Brampton, ON | 7% | Kawartha Lakes, ON | 1% |
| Kitchener, ON | 7% | Kelowna, BC | 1% |
| London, ON | 6% | Langley, BC (D) | 1% |
| North Vancouver, BC (D) | 5% | MapleRidge, BC | 1% |
| Waterloo, ON | 4% | Markham, ON | 1% |
| Burlington, ON | 3% | Medicine Hat, AB | 1% |
| Kingston, ON | 3% | Nanaimo, BC | 1% |
| Sault St. Marie, ON | 3% | Niagara Falls, ON | 1% |
| Barrie, ON | 2% | Oakville, ON | 1% |
| Burnaby, BC | 2% | Oshawa, ON | 1% |
| Cambridge, ON | 2% | Port Coquitlam, BC | 1% |
| Coquitlam, BC | 2% | Prince George, BC | 1% |
| Hamilton, ON | 2% | Regina, SK | 1% |
| Kamloops, BC | 1% | Richmond, BC | 1% |
| Surrey, BC | 2% | Richmond Hill, ON | 1% |
| Victoria, BC | 2% | Thunder Bay, ON | 1% |
| Windsor, ON | 2% | Vaughan, ON | 1% |
| Brantford, ON | 1% | | |
| Other Municipalities Not Listed in the Survey | | | |
| Municipality | Frequency | | |
| Mississauga, ON | 3 | Calgary, AB | 1 |
| North Vancouver, BC (C) | 2 | Region of York, ON | 1 |
| Ottawa, ON | 2 | Region of Peel, ON | 1 |
| Toronto, ON | 2 | Sidney, BC | 1 |

Source: Survey Data

| One Municipality Notable for Overall Efforts to Improve Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|----|
| Municipality | Responses | | |
| Peterborough, ON | 15% | Levis, QC | 3% |
| Guelph, ON | 15% | Moncton, NB | 3% |
| Kitchener, ON | 6% | Regina, SK | 3% |
| London, ON | 6% | Richmond Hill, ON | 3% |
| Brantford, ON | 3% | Richmond, BC | 3% |
| Burnaby, BC | 3% | Saanich, BC (D) | 3% |
| Burlington, ON | 3% | Sault St. Marie, ON | 3% |
| Coquitlam, BC | 3% | Sherbrooke, QC | 3% |
| Kamloops, BC | 3% | St. John's, NF | 3% |
| Kingston, ON | 3% | Surrey, BC | 3% |
| Laval, QC | 3% | Victoria, BC | 3% |
| Lethbridge, AB | 3% | | |

Source: Survey Data

| Exceptional Examples of Involving Persons with Disabilities in the Process of Planning | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|----|
| Municipality | Responses | | |
| Guelph, ON | 14% | London, ON | 4% |
| Brampton, ON | 11% | Nanaimo, BC | 4% |
| Burlington, ON | 7% | Newmarket, ON | 4% |
| Sault St. Marie, ON | 7% | Niagara Falls, ON | 4% |
| Kitchener, ON | 7% | North Vancouver, BC | 4% |
| Peterborough, ON | 7% | Oshawa, ON | 4% |
| Kelowna, BC | 4% | Prince George, BC | 4% |
| Burnaby, BC | 4% | Regina, SK | 4% |
| Kamloops, BC | 4% | St. John's, NF | 4% |
| Windsor, ON | 4% | | |
| Municipalities Not Listed in the Survey | | | |
| Municipality | Frequency | | |
| Mississauga, ON | 1 | | |
| North Vancouver, BC (C) | 1 | | |
| Region of Peel, ON | 1 | | |

Source: Survey Data

Other Municipalities That Are Undertaking Innovative Approaches to Improving Accessibility in Their Communities

| Municipality | Responses | |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Brampton, ON | 10% | Markham, ON 5% |
| Kitchener, ON | 10% | Niagara Falls, ON 5% |
| Sault St. Marie, ON | 5% | North Vancouver, BC (D) 5% |
| Ajax, ON | 5% | Oakville, ON 5% |
| Burlington, ON | 5% | Prince George, BC 5% |
| Cambridge, ON | 5% | Regina, SK 5% |
| Greater Sudbury, ON | 5% | Waterloo, ON 5% |
| Guelph, ON | 5% | Windsor, ON 5% |
| Kawartha Lakes, ON | 5% | |
| London, ON | 5% | |

Municipalities Not Listed in the Survey

| Municipality | Frequency |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Mississauga, ON | 1 |
| Ottawa, ON | 1 |
| Region of Peel, ON | 1 |

Source: Survey Data

Appendix C

Survey Cover Letter – English



School of Planning
Faculty of
Environmental Studies

University of Waterloo
200 University Ave West
Waterloo, Ontario
Canada N2L 3G1

519-8884567
Fax 725-2827

September 19, 2005

My name is Margaret Sanderson and I am a Master of Arts student in the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo conducting research under the supervision of Professor Laura Johnson and Professor Mark Seasons. My study examines accessibility planning for persons with disabilities in mid-size (population 50,000-500,000) Canadian municipalities.

There are two phases to this project. In the first phase, staff in 82 mid-size Canadian municipalities are being asked to participate in a web-based survey. I would appreciate if you would complete the brief survey.

Completion of the survey would take about 10 minutes of your time and participation in this survey is voluntary. If there are any questions you prefer not to answer, you may skip them. If you would like to write additional comments please feel free to do so.

It is important for you to know that any information that you provide will be confidential. All of the data will be summarized and no individual could be identified from these summarized results. Furthermore, the web site is programmed to collect responses to the survey alone. That is, the site will not collect any information that could potentially identify you (such as machine identifiers). Additionally if you begin entering responses to the survey on the Web and then choose not to complete the survey, the information that you have already entered will not be sent to me. Once you have completed the survey you will be asked if you are willing to be contacted about the 2nd phase of the project.

In the second phase of the project, I would like to conduct follow-up interviews to document innovative accessibility planning practices in a small subset of municipalities based on information provided in the web-based survey. My intention is to meet with participants at a time and location selected by the participant for an interview where we can discuss in more depth the accessibility planning practices within your municipality.

Your participation in this study will provide valuable insight about how municipalities are carrying out accessibility planning for persons with disabilities and will contribute to the emerging field of research in this area.

Participation in the interview would again be completely voluntary and you may decline to answer any questions you prefer not to answer. Your involvement in the first phase of the project does not require you to participate in the second phase. Information that you provide through your participation in both phases of the study will remain confidential and no personal information will be presented in the thesis or in any report or publication based on this research. There are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study and the data collected during this study will be kept for 2 years in a secure location.

If you wish to participate, please visit the Study Web site at the link in the accompanying email. From this page, click on "start survey" and follow the instructions provided. If you encounter a problem, please contact us and we will make arrangements to provide you with another method of participation. Additionally, alternate formats of this survey are available upon request.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at (519) 741-2229 (mjsander@fes.uwaterloo.ca) or Professor Laura Johnson at (519) 888-4567 Ext. 6635 (lcjohnso@fes.uwaterloo.ca) or Professor Mark Seasons at (519) 888-4567 Ext. 5922 (mseasons@fes.uwaterloo.ca)

This study has been reviewed by, and has received ethics clearance from the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any questions or concern resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes at the University of Waterloo office at (519) 888-4567, Ext. 6005.

I wish to thank you in advance for your co-operation in my research.

Yours Sincerely,

Margaret Sanderson
School of Planning
University of Waterloo

Survey Email – English

September 19, 2005

Dear Pam

My name is Margaret Sanderson and I am a Master of Arts student in the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo conducting research under the supervision of Professor Laura Johnson and Professor Mark Seasons. My study examines accessibility planning for persons with disabilities in mid-size (population 50,000-500,000) Canadian municipalities.

There are two phases to this project. In the first phase, staff in 82 mid-size Canadian municipalities are being asked to participate in a web-based survey. I would appreciate if you would complete the brief survey.

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Participation in the interview would again be completely voluntary and you may decline to answer any questions you prefer not to answer. Your involvement in the first phase of the project does not require you to participate in the second phase. Information that you provide through your participation in both phases of the study will remain confidential and no personal information will be presented in the thesis or in any report or publication based on this research. There are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study and the data collected during this study will be kept for 2 years in a secure location.

If you wish to participate, please visit the Study Web site at www.zoomerang.com

From this page, click on "start survey" and follow the instructions provided. If you encounter a problem, please contact us and we will make arrangements to provide you with another method of participation. Additionally, alternate formats of this survey are available upon request.

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This study has been reviewed by, and has received ethics clearance from the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any questions or concern resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes at the University of Waterloo office at (519) 888-4567, Ext. 6005.

I wish to thank you in advance for your co-operation in my research.

Yours Sincerely,

Margaret Sanderson
School of Planning
University of Waterloo

Survey Cover Letter – French



School of Planning
Faculty of
Environmental Studies

University of Waterloo
200 University Ave West
Waterloo, Ontario
Canada N2L 3G1

519-8884567
Fax 725-2827

12 septembre, 2005

Mon nom est Margaret Sanderson et je suis étudiante à la Maîtrise (M.A.) à l'École d'aménagement de l'Université de Waterloo, préparant une recherche sous la supervision des professeurs Laura Johnson et Mark Seasons. Mon étude examine la planification de l'accessibilité pour les personnes vivant une situation de handicap dans les municipalités canadiennes de moyenne taille (population de 50 000-500 000 habitants).

Il existe deux phases à ce projet. La première consiste à demander au personnel de 82 municipalités canadiennes de taille moyenne de participer à un sondage via internet. J'apprécierais énormément que vous complétiez ce bref sondage.

Compléter ce sondage prendra approximativement 10 minutes de votre temps et votre participation à ce sondage est entièrement volontaire. S'il y a des questions auxquelles vous préférez ne pas répondre, veuillez simplement les passer. Et si vous aimeriez ajouter des commentaires additionnels, je vous prie de le faire.

Il est important que vous sachiez que toute information que vous fournirez restera confidentielle. Toutes les données seront compilées de manière à ce qu'aucun individu ne soit identifié parmi l'ensemble des résultats. De plus, le site web est programmé de façon à compiler les données du sondage seulement. Ceci dit, le site ne recueillera en aucun cas de l'information pouvant vous identifier tel que des identificateurs d'appareils. Par ailleurs, si vous commencez à répondre à des questions du sondage et choisissez de ne pas compléter celui-ci, l'information que vous aurez entrée ne me sera pas acheminée. Une fois le sondage complété, il vous sera demandé si vous acceptez d'être contacté pour poursuivre la deuxième phase du projet.

Pour la deuxième phase du projet, j'aimerais réaliser des entrevues de suivi afin de documenter parmi un échantillon restreint de municipalités, les pratiques innovatrices en matière d'accessibilité pour les personnes ayant des incapacités, basé sur l'information issue du sondage sur le web. Mon objectif est de rencontrer quelques participants, à un temps et un lieu choisi par le participant, pour une entrevue où les pratiques en matière d'accessibilité dans votre municipalité seront discutées plus en profondeur.

Votre participation à cette étude sera un apport considérable pour l'évaluation de la manière dont les municipalités effectuent la planification de l'accessibilité aux personnes vivant une situation d'handicap et vous contribuerez à l'émergence de ce secteur de recherche.

Encore un fois, la participation à cette étude est entièrement volontaire et vous êtes libre de vous abstenir de répondre aux questions auxquelles vous ne souhaitez pas répondre. Votre contribution

à la première phase du projet ne vous engage pas à participer à la seconde phase. L'information que vous fournirez en participant à l'une ou l'autre des deux phases de l'étude restera confidentielle et aucune information personnelle ne sera dévoilée tant dans le mémoire de recherche, que dans tout autre rapport ou publication basés sur cette recherche. Il n'existe aucun risque connu ou anticipé à participer à cette étude, et les données collectées pour cette étude seront conservées dans un endroit sûr pour une période de deux ans.

Si vous désirez participer, veuillez s'il vous plaît visiter le site web de cette étude en cliquant sur le lien que vous trouverez dans le courriel accompagnant ce fichier.

À partir de cette page, cliquez sur « Commencer le sondage » et suivez les instructions. Si vous rencontrez un problème, veuillez s'il vous plaît me contacter et nous prendrons des arrangements afin qu'une méthode alternative de participation vous soit offerte. D'ailleurs, ce sondage est disponible sur demande dans des formats alternatifs.

Si vous avez des questions au sujet de l'étude ou aimeriez recevoir de l'information supplémentaire pouvant vous éclairer dans votre choix à participer à ce sondage, je vous prie de me contacter au (519) 741-2229 (mjsander@fes.uwaterloo.ca) ou la professeur Laura Johnson au (519) 888-4567 Ext. 6635 (lcjohnso@fes.uwaterloo.ca), ou le professeur Mark Seasons au (519) 888-4567 Ext. 5922(mseasons@fes.uwaterloo.ca).

Cette étude a été évaluée et a reçu l'approbation éthique du Bureau de la recherche et de l'éthique de l'Université de Waterloo. Si vous avez des questions ou préoccupations liées à votre participation, je vous invite à contacter Dr Susan Sykes au bureau de l'Université de Waterloo au (519) 888-4567, Ext. 6005.

J'aimerais vous remercier à l'avance pour votre coopération à ma recherche.

Sincèrement vôtre,

Margaret Sanderson
École d'aménagement
Université de Waterloo

Survey Email – French

12 septembre, 2005

Cher Denis

Mon nom est Margaret Sanderson et je suis étudiante à la Maîtrise (M.A.) à l'École d'aménagement de l'Université de Waterloo, préparant une recherche sous la supervision des professeurs Laura Johnson et Mark Seasons. Mon étude examine la planification de l'accessibilité pour les personnes vivant une situation de handicap dans les municipalités canadiennes de moyenne taille (population de 50 000-500 000 habitants).

Il existe deux phases à ce projet. La première consiste à demander au personnel de 82 municipalités canadiennes de taille moyenne de participer à un sondage via internet. J'apprécierais énormément que vous complétiez ce bref sondage.

Compléter ce sondage prendra approximativement 10 minutes de votre temps et votre participation à ce sondage est entièrement volontaire. S'il y a des questions auxquelles vous préférez ne pas répondre, veuillez simplement les passer. Et si vous aimeriez ajouter des commentaires additionnels, je vous prie de le faire.

Il est important que vous sachiez que toute information que vous fournirez restera confidentielle. Toutes les données seront compilées de manière à ce qu'aucun individu ne soit identifié parmi l'ensemble des résultats. De plus, le site web est programmé de façon à compiler les données du sondage seulement. Ceci dit, le site ne recueillera en aucun cas de l'information pouvant vous identifier tel que des identificateurs d'appareils. Par ailleurs, si vous commencez à répondre à des questions du sondage et choisissez de ne pas compléter celui-ci, l'information que vous aurez entrée ne me sera pas acheminée. Une fois le sondage complété, il vous sera demandé si vous acceptez d'être contacté pour poursuivre la deuxième phase du projet.

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Votre participation à cette étude sera un apport considérable pour l'évaluation de la manière dont les municipalités effectuent la planification de l'accessibilité aux personnes vivant une situation d'handicap et vous contribuerez à l'émergence de ce secteur de recherche.

Encore un fois, la participation à cette étude est entièrement volontaire et vous êtes libre de vous abstenir de répondre aux questions auxquelles vous ne souhaitez pas répondre. Votre contribution à la première phase du projet ne vous engage pas à participer à la seconde phase. L'information que vous fournirez en participant à l'une ou l'autre des deux phases de l'étude restera confidentielle et aucune information

personnelle ne sera dévoilée autant dans le mémoire de recherche, que dans tout autre rapport ou publication basés sur cette recherche. Il n'existe aucun risque connu ou anticipé à participer à cette étude, et les données collectées pour cette étude seront conservées dans un endroit sûr pour une période de deux ans.

Si vous désirez participer, veuillez s'il vous plaît visiter le site web de cette étude à www.zoomerang.com

À partir de cette page, cliquez sur « Commencer le sondage » et suivez les instructions. Si vous rencontrez un problème, veuillez s'il vous plaît me contacter et nous prendrons des arrangements afin qu'une méthode alternative de participation vous soit offerte. D'ailleurs, ce sondage est disponible sur demande dans des formats alternatifs.

Si vous avez des questions au sujet de l'étude ou aimeriez recevoir de l'information supplémentaire pouvant vous éclairer dans votre choix à participer à ce sondage, je vous prie de me contacter au (519) 741-2229 (mjsander@fes.uwaterloo.ca) ou la professeur Laura Johnson au (519) 888-4567 Ext. 6635 (lcjohnso@fes.uwaterloo.ca), ou le professeur Mark Seasons au (519) 888-4567 Ext. 5922(mseasons@fes.uwaterloo.ca).

Cette étude a été évaluée et a reçu l'approbation éthique du Bureau de la recherche et de l'éthique de l'Université de Waterloo. Si vous avez des questions ou préoccupations liées à votre participation, je vous invite à contacter Dr Susan Sykes au bureau de l'Université de Waterloo au (519) 888-4567, Ext. 6005.

J'aimerais vous remercier à l'avance pour votre coopération à ma recherche.

Sincèrement vôtre,

Margaret Sanderson
École d'aménagement
Université de Waterloo

Appendix D

Accessibility Planning in Mid-Size Canadian Municipalities

General Accessibility Planning

1

Municipalities provide such services as recreation, planning, housing and transportation. In YOUR municipality is there a SPECIFIC AREA OR AREAS notable for their efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities? If you answer YES please go to question 2. If you answer NO or DON'T KNOW please go to question 3.












2










Please briefly describe the area or areas and what is notable about their efforts.

3

In your opinion are there OTHER municipalities we should know about that are notable for their efforts in a specific area or areas? Please make your selection of municipalities from the list below or indicate in the space provided. Check all that apply. If you don't know please check the appropriate box.

- City of Abbotsford, BC
- Town of Ajax, ON
- City of Barrie, ON
- City of Belleville, ON
- City of Brampton, ON
- City of Brantford, ON
- City of Burlington, ON

-  City of Burnaby, BC
-  Town of Caledon, ON
-  City of Cambridge, ON
-  Cape Breton Regional Municipality, NS
-  City of Charlottetown, PEI
-  Municipality of Chatham-Kent, ON
-  City of Chilliwack, BC
-  Municipality of Clarington, ON
-  City of Cornwall, ON
-  City of Coquitlam, BC
-  City of Delta, BC
-  City of Fredericton, NB
-  City of Guelph, ON
-  Halifax Regional Municipality, NS
-  City of Hamilton, ON
-  City of Kamloops, BC
-  City of Kawartha Lakes, ON
-  City of Kelowna, BC
-  City of Kingston, ON
-  City of Kitchener, ON
-  City of Langley, BC
-  City of Lethbridge, AB
-  City of London, ON

-  District of Maple Ridge, BC
-  Town of Markham, ON
-  City of Medicine Hat, AB
-  City of Moncton, NB
-  City of Nanaimo, BC
-  Town of Newmarket, ON
-  City of New Westminster, BC
-  City of Niagara Falls, ON
-  Norfolk County, ON
-  City of North Bay, ON
-  District of North Vancouver, BC
-  Town of Oakville, ON
-  City of Oshawa, ON
-  City of Peterborough, ON
-  City of Pickering, ON
-  City of Port Coquitlam, BC
-  City of Prince George, BC
-  City of Red Deer, AB
-  City of Regina, SK
-  City of Richmond, BC
-  Town of Richmond Hill, ON
-  District of Saanich, BC
-  City of Saint John, NB

- City of Sarnia, ON
 - City of Saskatoon, SK
 - City of Sault Ste. Marie, ON
 - City of St. Albert, AB
 - City of St. Catharines, ON
 - City of St. John's, NF
 - Strathcona County, AB
 - City of Greater Sudbury, ON
 - City of Surrey, BC
 - City of Thunder Bay, ON
 - City of Vaughan, ON
 - City of Vernon, BC
 - City of Victoria, BC
 - City of Waterloo, ON
 - Town of Whitby, ON
 - City of Windsor, ON
 - Don't know
 - Other municipality not listed. Please specify
-



Survey Page 1

Municipalities

4

Considering the complete range of municipal services please select from the drop down menu below ONE municipality (feel free to select your own!) you believe to be most notable for OVERALL EFFORTS to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. If you don't know please check the appropriate box.

5

Please briefly describe what they are doing.

6

Why do you think the municipality you selected is notable?



Survey Page 2

Accessibility Planning in Mid-Size Canadian Municipalities

Involvement of Persons with Disabilities

7




Accessibility Advisory/Disability Issue Committees are one way of involving persons with disabilities in the process of accessibility planning. From the list below please check off the ways YOUR MUNICIPALITY involves persons with disabilities in the process of removing barriers to accessibility. Check all that apply.





















- Persons with disabilities participate in accessibility audits
- Persons with disabilities participate in policy development
- Persons with disabilities report accessibility problem areas
- Persons with disabilities try out new accessibility products
- Persons with disabilities review site plans and drawings
- Persons with disabilities provide training to staff
- None of the above
- Please describe any other involvement below

8

INCLUDING YOUR OWN MUNICIPALITY, do you know of initiatives or programs by Canadian municipalities that you believe are EXCEPTIONAL examples of involving persons with disabilities in the accessibility planning process? Please make your selection of municipalities from the list below. Check all that apply. If you don't know please check the appropriate box.

- City of Abbotsford, BC
- Town of Ajax, ON
- City of Barrie, ON
- City of Belleville, ON
- City of Brampton, ON
- City of Brantford, ON
- City of Burlington, ON
- City of Burnaby, BC
- Town of Caledon, ON
- City of Cambridge, ON

-  Cape Breton Regional Municipality, NS
-  City of Charlottetown, PEI
-  Municipality of Chatham-Kent, ON
-  City of Chilliwack, BC
-  Municipality of Clarington, ON
-  City of Cornwall, ON
-  City of Coquitlam, BC
-  City of Delta, BC
-  City of Fredericton, NB
-  City of Guelph, ON
-  Halifax Regional Municipality, NS
-  City of Hamilton, ON
-  City of Kamloops, BC
-  City of Kawartha Lakes, ON
-  City of Kelowna, BC
-  City of Kingston, ON
-  City of Kitchener, ON
-  City of Langley, BC
-  City of Lethbridge, AB
-  City of London, ON
-  District of Maple Ridge, BC
-  Town of Markham, ON
-  City of Medicine Hat, AB

-  City of Moncton, NB
-  City of Nanaimo, BC
-  Town of Newmarket, ON
-  City of New Westminster, BC
-  City of Niagara Falls, ON
-  Norfolk County, ON
-  City of North Bay, ON
-  District of North Vancouver, BC
-  Town of Oakville, ON
-  City of Oshawa, ON
-  City of Peterborough, ON
-  City of Pickering, ON
-  City of Port Coquitlam, BC
-  City of Prince George, BC
-  City of Red Deer, AB
-  City of Regina, SK
-  City of Richmond, BC
-  Town of Richmond Hill, ON
-  District of Saanich, BC
-  City of Saint John, NB
-  City of Sarnia, ON
-  City of Saskatoon, SK
-  City of Sault Ste. Marie, ON

- City of St. Albert, AB
 - City of St. Catharines, ON
 - City of St. John's, NF
 - Strathcona County, AB
 - City of Greater Sudbury, ON
 - City of Surrey, BC
 - City of Thunder Bay, ON
 - City of Vaughan, ON
 - City of Vernon, BC
 - City of Victoria, BC
 - City of Waterloo, ON
 - Town of Whitby, ON
 - City of Windsor, ON
 - Don't know
 - Other municipality not listed. Please specify
-

9

Please briefly describe what is exceptional.



Survey Page 3

Municipalities

Innovation in Accessibility Planning

10

There are many EXAMPLES OF INNOVATION in accessibility planning including computer-generated mapping of the accessibility of a downtown, "Assess-a-Can" an accessibility rating scale for public washrooms and way-finding systems designed to assist persons with disabilities to navigate through urban settings. In YOUR MUNICIPALITY are there initiatives or programs that you believe are innovative in improving accessibility for persons with disabilities? If you answer YES please go to question 11. If you answer NO or DON'T KNOW please go to question 12.



















11

If YES, please briefly describe what is innovative about the program or initiative.

12

Are you aware of OTHER MUNICIPALITIES that are undertaking INNOVATIVE approaches to improving accessibility in their communities? Please make your selection from the list below. Check all that apply. If you don't know please check the appropriate box.

- City of Abbotsford, BC
- Town of Ajax, ON
- City of Barrie, ON
- City of Belleville, ON
- City of Brampton, ON
- City of Brantford, ON

-  City of Burlington, ON
-  City of Burnaby, BC
-  Town of Caledon, ON
-  City of Cambridge, ON
-  Cape Breton Regional Municipality, NS
-  City of Charlottetown, PEI
-  Municipality of Chatham-Kent, ON
-  City of Chilliwack, BC
-  Municipality of Clarington, ON
-  City of Cornwall, ON
-  City of Coquitlam, BC
-  City of Delta, BC
-  City of Fredericton, NB
-  City of Guelph, ON
-  Halifax Regional Municipality, NS
-  City of Hamilton, ON
-  City of Kamloops, BC
-  City of Kawartha Lakes, ON
-  City of Kelowna, BC
-  City of Kingston, ON
-  City of Kitchener, ON
-  City of Langley, BC
-  City of Lethbridge, AB

-  City of London, ON
-  District of Maple Ridge, BC
-  Town of Markham, ON
-  City of Medicine Hat, AB
-  City of Moncton, NB
-  City of Nanaimo, BC
-  Town of Newmarket, ON
-  City of New Westminster, BC
-  City of Niagara Falls, ON
-  Norfolk County, ON
-  City of North Bay, ON
-  District of North Vancouver, BC
-  Town of Oakville, ON
-  City of Oshawa, ON
-  City of Peterborough, ON
-  City of Pickering, ON
-  City of Port Coquitlam, BC
-  City of Prince George, BC
-  City of Red Deer, AB
-  City of Regina, SK
-  City of Richmond, BC
-  Town of Richmond Hill, ON
-  District of Saanich, BC

- City of Saint John, NB
- City of Sarnia, ON
- City of Saskatoon, SK
- City of Sault Ste. Marie, ON
- City of St. Albert, AB
- City of St. Catharines, ON
- City of St. John's, NF
- Strathcona County, AB
- City of Greater Sudbury, ON
- City of Surrey, BC
- City of Thunder Bay, ON
- City of Vaughan, ON
- City of Vernon, BC
- City of Victoria, BC
- City of Waterloo, ON
- Town of Whitby, ON
- City of Windsor, ON
- Don't know
- Other municipality not listed. Please specify

13

Please briefly describe what is noteworthy about their approach.

Knowledge of services needed by persons with disabilities

1

2

3

Coordination and information sharing with other municipalities

1

2

3

15

Are there other factors you believe affect efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities in your community? If YES, please briefly describe.

YES NO

Additional Comment



Survey Page 5

Accessibility Planning in Mid-Size Canadian Municipalities

Concluding Questions

16

In your opinion what would you find helpful in accessibility planning? Please make your selection from the list below. Check all that apply

- Workshops/Conferences
- Awards to acknowledge excellence and innovation
- E-newsletter on what's happening in the field of accessibility
- Tours of interesting/innovative examples of accessibility

Networking group/association

Listserv

Other, Please Specify

17

We are very interested in hearing about any special initiatives or projects your municipality may have undertaken. Please feel free to tell us about them or to add any thing further about this survey or its questions.



Survey Page 6

Accessibility Planning in Mid-Size Canadian Municipalities

Survey Completion

You have now completed the survey. We greatly appreciate the time you have taken out of your day to complete this!

If you are willing to be contacted about the 2nd phase of the project, please provide your contact information below; or, if you prefer your survey responses to remain anonymous, please send us an email at mjsander@fes.uwaterloo.ca.

If you have decided to end your participation at this point, we want to thank you for your time.

18

Contact Information

Name

Work Telephone
Number

Email Address



Survey Page 7

La planification de l'accessibilité dans les villes canadiennes de moyenne taille

La planification de l'accessibilité en général

1

Les municipalités offrent différents services tels que des services de loisir, d'urbanisme, d'habitation et de transport. Au sein de VOTRE municipalité, existe-t-il un ou des secteurs reconnus pour leurs efforts dans l'amélioration de l'accessibilité pour les personnes vivant une situation de handicap? Si vous répondez OUI à cette question, passez à la question 2. Si vous répondez NON ou JE NE SAIS PAS, veuillez aller directement à la question 3.

- OUI
- NON
- JE NE SAIS PAS

2

Décrivez brièvement ce ou ces secteurs et en quoi est-il ou sont-ils reconnu(s) pour leurs efforts?

3

Selon vous, existent-ils d'AUTRES municipalités que nous devrions connaître qui sont reconnues pour leurs efforts dans un ou des secteurs particuliers? Veuillez faire votre sélection à partir de la liste ci-dessous ou indiquer celle (s)-ci dans l'espace fourni. Cochez tous les choix qui s'appliquent. Si vous ne savez pas, cocher la case appropriée.

- Ville d'Abbotsford, C.-B.
- Ville d'Ajax, ON.
- Ville de Barrie, ON.
- Ville de Belleville, ON.

- Ville de Brampton, ON.
- Ville de Brantford, ON.
- Ville de Burlington, ON.
- Ville de Burnaby, C.-B.
- Ville de Caledon, ON.
- Ville de Cambridge, ON.
- Ville de Cape Breton, N.-É.
- Ville de Charlottetown, île-du-Prince-Édouard
- Ville de Chatham-Kent, ON.
- Ville de Chilliwack, C.-B.
- Ville de Clarington, ON.
- Ville de Cornwall, ON.
- Ville de Coquitlam, C.-B.
- Corporation de Delta, C.-B.
- Ville de Drummondville, QC.
- Ville de Fredericton, N.-B.
- Ville de Gatineau, QC.
- Ville de Guelph, ON.
- Ville de Granby, QC.
- Municipalité régionale d'Halifax, N.-É
- Ville de Hamilton, ON.
- Ville de Kamloops, C.-B.
- Ville de Kawartha Lakes, ON.

- Ville de Kelowna, C.-B.
- Ville de Kingston, ON.
- Ville de Kitchener, ON.
- Ville de Langley, C.-B.
- Ville de Laval, QC.
- Ville de Lethbridge, AB.
- Ville de Lévis, QC.
- Ville de London, ON.
- Ville de Longueuil, QC.
- Ville de Maple Ridge, C.-B.
- Ville de Markham, ON.
- Ville de Medicine Hat, AB.
- Ville de Moncton, N.-B.
- Ville de Nanaimo, C.-B.
- Ville de Newmarket, ON.
- Ville de New Westminster, C.-B.
- Ville de Niagara Falls, ON.
- Comté de Norfolk, ON.
- Ville de North Bay, ON.
- District de Vancouver Nord, C.-B.
- Ville d'Oakville, ON.
- Ville d'Oshawa, ON.
- Ville de Peterborough, ON.

- Ville de Pickering, ON.
- Ville de Port Coquitlam, C.-B.
- Ville de Prince George, C.-B.
- Ville de Québec, QC.
- Ville de Red Deer, AB.
- Ville de Regina, SK.
- Ville de Repentigny, QC.
- Ville de Richmond, C.-B.
- Ville de Richmond Hill, ON.
- Ville de Saanich, C.-B.
- Ville de Saguenay, QC.
- Ville de Saint-Jean-Sur-Richelieu, QC.
- Ville de Saint John, N.-B.
- Ville de Sarnia, ON.
- Ville de Saskatoon, SK.
- Ville de Sault Ste. Marie, ON.
- Ville de Shawinigan, QC.
- Ville de Sherbrooke, QC.
- Ville de St. Albert, AB.
- Ville de St. Catharines, ON.
- Ville de St. John's, T.-N.
- Comté de Strathcona, AB.
- Ville de Greater Sudbury, ON.

- Ville de Surrey, C.-B.
- Ville de Thunder Bay, ON.
- Ville de Trois-Rivières, QC.
- Ville de Vaughan, ON.
- Ville de Vernon, C.-B.
- Ville de Victoria, C.-B.
- Ville de Waterloo, ON.
- Ville de Whitby, ON.
- Ville de Windsor, ON.
- Je ne sais pas
- Autre municipalité. Veuillez spécifier.

Soumettre

Survey Page 1

La planification de l'accessibilité dans les villes canadiennes de moyenne taille

4

Considérant la variété des services offerts par les municipalités, veuillez sélectionner à partir du menu déroulant UNE municipalité (il vous est possible de choisir votre propre municipalité) qui selon vous se distingue pour son EFFORT GÉNÉRAL dans l'amélioration de l'accessibilité pour le personne vivant une situation de handicap. Si vous ne savez pas, veuillez cochez la case appropriée.

5

Veuillez s'il vous plaît décrire que font-ils en matière d'accessibilité?

6

Pourquoi croyez-vous que cette municipalité se distingue des autres?

Soumettre

Survey Page 2

La planification de l'accessibilité dans les villes canadiennes de moyenne taille

Participation des personnes vivant une situation de handicap

7

Les comités consultatifs sur l'accessibilité des personnes vivant une situation de handicap sont l'un des moyens d'intégrer les personnes ayant des incapacités au processus de planification de l'accessibilité. A partir des choix offerts ci-dessous, veuillez cochez les moyens que VOTRE MUNICIPALITÉ utilise pour impliquer les personnes vivant une situation d'handicap. Cochez tous les choix qui s'appliquent. Les personnes vivant une situation de handicap...

- participent aux séances de consultation sur l'accessibilité
- participent au développement des politiques
- rapportent les secteurs où l'accessibilité est problématique
- font l'essai des nouveaux produits pour l'accessibilité
- revoient les plans d'implantation et d'intégration architecturale
- offrent des formations au personnel
- aucun de ces choix

Décrivez tout autre moyen de participation.

8

Incluant votre municipalité, connaissez-vous des initiatives ou programmes mis en place par des municipalités canadiennes que vous jugez être des exemples EXCEPTIONNELS d'intégration des personnes vivant une situation de handicap au processus de planification de l'accessibilité? Veuillez s.v.p. faire votre choix à partir de la liste de municipalités suivante. Cochez tous les choix qui s'appliquent. Si vous n'avez aucune idée, cochez la case appropriée.

- Ville de Belleville, ON.
- Ville de Brampton, ON.
- Ville de Brantford, ON.
- Ville de Burlington, ON.
- Ville de Burnaby, C.-B.
- Ville de Caledon, ON.
- Ville de Cambridge, ON.
- Ville de Cape Breton, N.-É.
- Ville de Charlottetown, île-du-Prince-Édouard
- Ville de Chatham-Kent, ON.
- Ville de Chilliwack, C.-B.
- Ville de Clarington, ON.
- Ville de Cornwall, ON.
- Ville de Coquitlam, C.-B.
- Corporation de Delta, C.-B.
- Ville de Drummondville, QC.
- Ville de Fredericton, N.-B.

- Ville de Gatineau, QC.
- Ville de Guelph, ON.
- Ville de Granby, QC.
- Municipalité régionale d'Halifax, N.-É
- Ville de Hamilton, ON.
- Ville de Kamloops, C.-B.
- Ville de Kawartha Lakes, ON.
- Ville de Kelowna, C.-B.
- Ville de Kingston, ON.
- Ville de Kitchener, ON.
- Ville de Langley, C.-B.
- Ville de Laval, QC.
- Ville de Lethbridge, AB.
- Ville de Lévis, QC.
- Ville de London, ON.
- Ville de Longueuil, QC.
- Ville de Maple Ridge, C.-B.
- Ville de Markham, ON.
- Ville de Medicine Hat, AB.
- Ville de Moncton, N.-B.
- Ville de Nanaimo, C.-B.
- Ville de Newmarket, ON.
- Ville de New Westminster, C.-B.

- Ville de Niagara Falls, ON.
- Comté de Norfolk, ON.
- Ville de North Bay, ON.
- District de Vancouver Nord, C.-B.
- Ville d'Oakville, ON.
- Ville d'Oshawa, ON.
- Ville de Peterborough, ON.
- Ville de Pickering, ON.
- Ville de Port Coquitlam, C.-B.
- Ville de Prince George, C.-B.
- Ville de Québec, QC.
- Ville de Red Deer, AB.
- Ville de Regina, SK.
- Ville de Repentigny, QC.
- Ville de Richmond, C.-B.
- Ville de Richmond Hill, ON.
- Ville de Saanich, C.-B.
- Ville de Saguenay, QC.
- Ville de Saint-Jean-Sur-Richelieu, QC.
- Ville de Saint John, N.-B.
- Ville de Sarnia, ON.
- Ville de Saskatoon, SK.
- Ville de Sault Ste. Marie, ON.

- Ville de Shawinigan, QC.
- Ville de Sherbrooke, QC.
- Ville de St. Albert, AB.
- Ville de St. Catharines, ON.
- Ville de St. John's, T.-N.
- Comté de Strathcona, AB.
- Ville de Greater Sudbury, ON.
- Ville de Surrey, C.-B.
- Ville de Thunder Bay, ON.
- Ville de Trois-Rivières, QC.
- Ville de Vaughan, ON.
- Ville de Vernon, C.-B.
- Ville de Victoria, C.-B.
- Ville de Waterloo, ON.
- Ville de Whitby, ON.
- Ville de Windsor, ON.
- Je ne sais pas
- Autre municipalité. Veuillez spécifier.

9

Veillez brièvement décrire le caractère exceptionnel de ces actions.

Soumettre

La planification de l'accessibilité dans les villes canadiennes de moyenne taille

Innovation en planification de l'accessibilité

10

Il existe plusieurs exemples d'innovation en matière de planification de l'accessibilité tel que les cartes assistées par ordinateur représentant l'accessibilité d'un centre-ville, un outil mesurant l'accessibilité des toilettes publiques, un système d'orientation conçu pour assister la personne vivant une situation de handicap à se déplacer en milieu urbain. Dans VOTRE MUNICIPALITÉ, existe-t-il des initiatives ou programmes que vous jugez innovateurs pour améliorer l'accessibilité pour des personnes vivant une situation de handicap? Si vous répondez OUI, allez à la question 11. Si vous répondez NON ou JE NE SAIS PAS, veuillez passer à la question 12.

- OUI
- NON
- JE NE SAIS PAS

11

Si OUI, veuillez décrire brièvement quel caractère innovateur a ce programme ou cette initiative.

12

Connaissez-vous d'AUTRES MUNICIPALITÉS adoptant des approches innovatrices en matière d'amélioration de l'accessibilité dans leurs communautés? Veuillez faire votre sélection à partir de la liste ci-dessous. Cochez tous les choix qui s'appliquent. Si vous ne savez pas, cochez la case appropriée.

- Ville de Belleville, ON.
- Ville de Brampton, ON.

- Ville de Brantford, ON.
- Ville de Burlington, ON.
- Ville de Burnaby, C.-B.
- Ville de Caledon, ON.
- Ville de Cambridge, ON.
- Ville de Cape Breton, N.-É.
- Ville de Charlottetown, île-du-Prince-Édouard
- Ville de Chatham-Kent, ON.
- Ville de Chilliwack, C.-B.
- Ville de Clarington, ON.
- Ville de Cornwall, ON.
- Ville de Coquitlam, C.-B.
- Corporation de Delta, C.-B.
- Ville de Drummondville, QC.
- Ville de Fredericton, N.-B.
- Ville de Gatineau, QC.
- Ville de Guelph, ON.
- Ville de Granby, QC.
- Municipalité régionale d'Halifax, N.-É
- Ville de Hamilton, ON.
- Ville de Kamloops, C.-B.
- Ville de Kawartha Lakes, ON.
- Ville de Kelowna, C.-B.

- Ville de Kingston, ON.
- Ville de Kitchener, ON.
- Ville de Langley, C.-B.
- Ville de Laval, QC.
- Ville de Lethbridge, AB.
- Ville de Lévis, QC.
- Ville de London, ON.
- Ville de Longueuil, QC.
- Ville de Maple Ridge, C.-B.
- Ville de Markham, ON.
- Ville de Medicine Hat, AB.
- Ville de Moncton, N.-B.
- Ville de Nanaimo, C.-B.
- Ville de Newmarket, ON.
- Ville de New Westminster, C.-B.
- Ville de Niagara Falls, ON.
- Comté de Norfolk, ON.
- Ville de North Bay, ON.
- District de Vancouver Nord, C.-B.
- Ville d'Oakville, ON.
- Ville d'Oshawa, ON.
- Ville de Peterborough, ON.
- Ville de Pickering, ON.

- Ville de Port Coquitlam, C.-B.
- Ville de Prince George, C.-B.
- Ville de Québec, QC.
- Ville de Red Deer, AB.
- Ville de Regina, SK.
- Ville de Repentigny, QC.
- Ville de Richmond, C.-B.
- Ville de Richmond Hill, ON.
- Ville de Saanich, C.-B.
- Ville de Saguenay, QC.
- Ville de Saint-Jean-Sur-Richelieu, QC.
- Ville de Saint John, N.-B.
- Ville de Sarnia, ON.
- Ville de Saskatoon, SK.
- Ville de Sault Ste. Marie, ON.
- Ville de Shawinigan, QC.
- Ville de Sherbrooke, QC.
- Ville de St. Albert, AB.
- Ville de St. Catharines, ON.
- Ville de St. John's, T.-N.
- Comté de Strathcona, AB.
- Ville de Greater Sudbury, ON.
- Ville de Surrey, C.-B.

- Ville de Thunder Bay, ON.
- Ville de Trois-Rivières, QC.
- Ville de Vaughan, ON.
- Ville de Vernon, C.-B.
- Ville de Victoria, C.-B.
- Ville de Waterloo, ON.
- Ville de Whitby, ON.
- Ville de Windsor, ON.
- Je ne sais pas
- Autre municipalité. Veuillez spécifier.

13

Décrivez brièvement ce qu'il y a de notable à leur approche.

Soumettre

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La planification de l'accessibilité dans les villes canadiennes de moyenne taille

Facteurs influençant les efforts pour l'amélioration de l'accessibilité

14

Nous souhaitons connaître votre opinion au sujet des facteurs qui SELON VOUS influencent les efforts investis à améliorer l'accessibilité pour les personnes vivant une situation de handicap de votre

communauté. Veuillez évaluer chacun des facteurs en fonction de leur degré d'importance (1 étant le plus important, 2 ayant une certaine importance, 3 étant le moins important).

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Le plus important | Ayant une certaine importance | Étant le moins important |
| <hr/> | | |
| Participation et implication des personnes vivant une situation de handicap | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Intérêt de la part des élus | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Ressources financières consacrées à l'amélioration de l'accessibilité | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Ressources humaines | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Conscientisation du personnel à la réglementation en matière d'accessibilité et droits humains | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Formation du personnel municipal | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Connaissance exacte du nombre de personnes vivant une situation de handicap | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Connaissance réelle des services dont ont besoin les personnes ayant des incapacités | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Coordination et échange d'information avec les autres municipalités | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

15

Connaissez-vous d'autres facteurs qui selon vous affectent les efforts investis à l'amélioration de l'accessibilité pour les personnes vivant un handicap?

- OUI
- NON
- Commentaires additionnels.

Soumettre

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La planification de l'accessibilité dans les villes canadiennes de moyenne taille

Questions en guise de conclusion

16

D'après vous, qu'est-ce qui aiderait la planification de l'accessibilité? Veuillez faire votre sélection à partir de la liste suivante. Cochez tous les choix qui s'appliquent.

- Ateliers/Conférences
- Remise de prix pour souligner l'excellence et l'innovation
- Bulletin électronique sur ce qui se passe dans les domaines de l'accessibilité
- Visites de lieux d'intérêt et d'innovation en matière d'accessibilité
- Réseautage avec les différents groupes et associations
- Listes ou forums de discussion (listserv)
- Autre, Spécifiez

17

Nous sommes intéressés à connaître toute initiative ou projet spécial mis en oeuvre par votre municipalité. Veuillez s.v.p. nous en faire part ou ajouter tout autre commentaire lié à ce sondage ou ses questions.

Soumettre

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La planification de l'accessibilité dans les villes canadiennes de moyenne taille

Sondage complété

Vous avez maintenant complété le sondage. Nous apprécions grandement le précieux temps que vous avez consacré à compléter ce sondage.

Si vous êtes intéressés à être contacté pour la 2e phase de ce projet, veuillez nous fournir vos coordonnées ci bas; ou, si vous préférez que votre participation à ce sondage reste anonyme, envoyez-nous un courriel à mjsander@fes.uwaterloo.ca

Si vous décidez de terminer ici votre participation à notre projet, nous aimerions vous remercier pour votre contribution.

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Coordonnées

Nom:

Téléphone au travail:

Courriel:

Soumettre

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